THE TRANSFIGURATION.

THE FEASTS AND FASTS of the CHURCH.

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THE FEASTS *and* FASTS OF THE *Church of* ENGLAND;

THE

REASONS and GROUNDS of their Celebration;

WITH

Practical MEDITATIONS

Upon the ſeveral DAYS:

Concluding each diſtinct HEAD with ſuitable PRAYERS, and the proper COLLECTS of the CHURCH.

To which is added, an

APPENDIX,

Wherein the three grand SOLEMNITIES, added to the LITURGY of the *CHURCH of ENGLAND*, are clearly explain'd.

Illuſtrated with many new and curious Copper-Plates.

LONDON:

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M.DCC.XXXII.

THE PREFACE.

'TIS *obvious to common reaſon that knowledge and practice have a cloſe and inſeparable connexion; and even the meaneſt mechanick has a ſenſible conviction of this truth from his own art, in which knowledge and experience muſt precede the uſe and exerciſe of his myſtery: And this chain and neceſſary dependence of the one on the other, takes place more forcibly in matters of Religion than in matters of ſenſe. If therefore it may be deduced from an internal principle and revelation that man is an accountable creature, and that the practice of religion is inforc'd upon him by the moſt ſacred tyes; the ſame obligation which conſtrains him to be religious, does equally dictate to him the importance of Chriſtian knowledge; which is the only guide or inſtrument of conveyance, by which his practice can be render'd a reaſonable ſervice. As this concluſion recommends itſelf to our approbation by its ſelf-evidence, ſo it may be eſteem'd no unprofitable enquiry, what kind of knowledge is moſt concerning in its tendency, and likely to make the influence and impreſſion moſt laſting and effectual: In order hereunto, let us look into the admirable* piety *and* ſanctity *of thoſe heroick* Saints *and* Martyrs *in the primitive times, who evidently demonſtrated their* faith *by their* works, *and*

prov'd the divinity *of their religion by the* heavenlineſs *of their lives. This will mightily contribute to our progreſs and encouragement in all* Chriſtian virtues: *For by obſerving the* brightneſs *of their luſtre, we ſhall at the ſame time diſcern the* faintneſs *and* dimneſs *of our own light, and bluſh to ſee the preſent age ſo much* eclips'd *by the unequal compariſon. There is no doubt, but a good* example *doth far more effectually inſtruct than good* precepts *and* counſels; *becauſe it doth not only expreſs the ſame* virtues *which the* precepts *enjoin, but alſo expreſſes them with much more grace and* emphaſis. *For* precepts *and* diſcourſes *of virtue, are only dead* pictures *and artificial* landſkips; *whereas a virtuous* example, *is* virtue itſelf, alive *and in* motion, *exerting and exhibiting itſelf, in all its natural* charms *and* attractions. *And therefore, by how much* nature *exceeds* art, *and the moſt accompliſh'd* Beauties *excel their* ſtatues *and* pictures, *by ſo much is virtue in* examples, *more amiable and attractive, than when we only behold it deſcrib'd and pictur'd in virtuous* precepts *and* diſcourſes. *For theſe reaſons, the* Goſpel *hath enjoin'd us to propoſe to our ſelves the beſt and moſt excellent* examples; *to be* followers *of the* Apoſtles, as they were of *Chriſt, (*1 Cor. xi. 1.*) They bore up under the* acuteſt *torments, with more than* manly *and* philoſophick *bravery*; *and* Chriſt crucify'd *was to them irreſiſtible* Rhetorick. *And being thus acted by* noble *impulſes, they trampled upon thoſe little projects of* profit *or* pleaſure *which* enſnare *and* enſlave *other men, and made all their deſigns ſubſervient to the intereſts of a better* country. *Now what can have a greater influence to diſpoſe us to the practice of holineſs, than ſuch admi-*

rable

rable examples? *What can more invincibly preſs upon our* ingenuity, *than the* lives *and* actions *of thoſe great and gallant* ſouls *whoſe converſations were in* Heaven; *whoſe Spirits breath'd in* too *free an air to be caught with the charms of the beſt enjoyments this* world *could afford*; *and look upon the* delights *and* advantages *of this* life, *as things not worthy to arreſt their affections in their journey to a* better? *All this, methinks, muſt needs* recommend *the excellency and importance, and* demonſtrate *the poſſibility of copying the example. For to ſee* men *like our ſelves, who are united to frail* fleſh, *and in the ſame condition with us, to* command *their paſſions, and to* overcome *the moſt* inviting *and* ſhocking *temptations, muſt needs be a ſtrong encouragement to* goodneſs, *and diſcover the extent and influence of* chriſtian virtue. *No* language *can be more effectual than this, to convince us that the* pleaſures *of this world, are not comparable to thoſe* rivers of pleaſures *which God offers us*; *and that the being* faithful unto death, *is the beſt way to* gain a crown of life. *Let a man viſit* Paul *and* Silas *in the priſon, and he ſhall hear them chanting forth anthems of praiſe:* Peter *and the other* Apoſtles, *after their ſtripes and beating, and he ſhall find them rejoicing: And* Stephen *amidſt the throng of his* murderers, *and he ſhall obſerve him entertaining himſelf with ſeeing the* Heavens open'd, and *Jeſus* ſtanding at the right hand of God. *And now, ſince ſuch* bleſſedneſs *is the reward of thoſe who* ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, *we muſt be ſtupid to a degree of infatuation, if theſe lively portraits do not animate our endeavours, and make all the* pomps *and* vanities *of this world diſappear.*

Let

Let us then ſet the Apoſtles *of our bleſſed* Lord *before our eyes, and follow their* examples *till we ourſelves grow* exemplary. *But above all, let us imitate the* perfections *and* actions *of the holy* Jeſus, *with the greateſt* vigour *and* attention *of ſoul. Let us peruſe the* hiſtory *of his ſacred life, and diligently obſerve his* carriage *and* demeanour, *in all thoſe capacities and circumſtances, wherein he was plac'd; and cloſely apply it to our ſelves, as a moſt perfect pattern of* action. *Let us endeavour to form our* natures *to his, to rectify the* features *and* lineaments *of our ſouls, by his moſt amiable* idea; *and regulate all our* motions *by thoſe invariable laws of* reaſon *whereby he* wills *and* acts. *And this will* inſpire *us with a divine emulation; it will* animate *our weakneſſes, and* ſhame *our irregularities; and by this means our actions will be attended by the reports and joyful* echo's *of a* conſcience *which condemns not, and even anticipate the applauſe of* well done thou good and faithful ſervant!

My deſign then in the following attempt, is to give a rational and plain draught of the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church of *England. It cannot be denied, but that the* ſubjects *are in themſelves truly great and noble; but as for the* management *thereof, all that I can ſay, is this; I have employ'd my beſt* thoughts *and* ſkill *to treat this excellent* theme *ſuitably to its own native majeſty: I have throughout the whole endeavour'd to deliver the moſt material* conceptions, *in the moſt* plain *and* compendious *manner: Being willing to croud many* truths *into a narrow compaſs, but yet ſo, that I have been particularly careful to deduce at large, whatſoever was moſt proper to demonſtrate the fundamental doctrines*

and

and ſuperior excellency *of the* Chriſtian religion. *And to the end that I might not entertain my Reader with* doubtful *and* fabulous *traditions, I have all a long conſulted ſuch* Authors, *of whoſe integrity there is no juſt cauſe to doubt, making uſe of none but ſuch as are of unqueſtionable* credit *and* authority. *So that in this* performance *I can juſtly ſay, I have deliver'd nothing but what is in every reſpect agreeable to the doctrine of the* Church of *England, and to the ſenſe of the earlieſt ages. I have induſtriouſly peruſed moſt* eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians *of the firſt rank; and muſt not omit to acknowledge particularly, that I have receiv'd conſiderable advantages from Dr.* Cave, *and Dr.* Pearſon *the late learned Biſhop of* Cheſter, *having made frequent uſe of their* works.

THE

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THE INTRODUCTION.

GOD, who is the living fountain of all perfections, when he had *created the heavens and the earth* in exquisite beauty and order, was willing to provide a Governor for all his corporeal creatures; and therefore out of his incomprehensible wisdom he created *man after his own image*, and made him, among all his works, one of the most perfect models of created excellency. Thus man was endued with a great and capacious understanding, and his knowledge extended to the whole compass of the creation: Nay, his mind was not confin'd to the material and visible world, but ascended by several gradations to the universal cause: And he plainly and clearly discern'd the stupendious wisdom, and power, and goodness, of his great Creator. All this was not attain'd by study, neither was it the product of anxious enquiry; for such was the perfection of his faculties, that the bare consideration of the variety, the order, the beauty and stability of the world, was demonstration sufficient whereby to discover the

Man's *crition.*

The top and perfection of the viſible world.

wiſdom which ſo wonderfully diſpos'd it. No ſooner did the fabrick of heaven and earth preſent itſelf to his view, but immediately he diſcover'd the moſt expreſs and clear characters of that almighty power which produc'd it. For what could remove the infinite diſtance between not being and being, but an almighty power? As there is no proportion between not being and being, ſo the cauſe which unites thoſe terms, muſt be without limits. The knowledge of this fill'd his ſoul with incredible wonder and delight! For if the *Pſalmiſt* (ſince the vigour of man's underſtanding was ſtrangely impair'd by the Fall) could break forth with aſtoniſhment, as one in the midſt of innumerable miracles, ſaying; *O Lord! how manifold are thy works; in wiſdom haſt thou made them all!* How much more muſt man in his original condition, (who then perfectly underſtood univerſal nature; the offices and uſes of its parts, as well as the harmony of the whole, by which God hath introduced ſuch a multitude of different and diſagreeing Beings) be tranſported at the more ample diſcovery of the tranſcendent excellencies of his great Creator? Thus wiſe and happy was man in his primitive ſtate; and tho' his body was form'd of the duſt of the earth, yet 'twas *made* after a *fearful* and *wonderful* manner, (as holy *David* obſerves;) the contrivance of its parts being with that proportion and exactneſs as moſt conduc'd to comelineſs and ſervice, and fram'd ſo as to make a full and amiable diſcovery of the prerogatives of his creation: Even in his face and words there was ſomething ſo awful, as commanded all the hoſts of the lower world. Beſides this, he was alſo endued with an immortal ſoul, that was to ſubſiſt for ever in this, or ſome other ſtate of ſuperior delight and beatitude:

beatitude: In ſhort, *Adam* enjoy'd nature in its original purity; the world was all harmony and beauty; the earth was liberal to him of all its treaſures, and the heavens of their light and ſweeteſt influences; and that nothing might be wanting to compleat his happineſs, God almighty form'd *Eve* to be a companion for him: And theſe were both ſeated in *Eden*, a place of ſuch entertainment and delight, that it repreſented the celeſtial *Paradiſe*, which is refreſh'd with *rivers of pleaſures*: So that in a word, all the bleſſings which they enjoy'd, do exceed the bounds of our preſent feeble and impair'd imaginations. Adam *perfectly happy.*

Now for the continuance of theſe ineſtimable favours, almighty God required no more but that *Adam* and *Eve* ſhould live in a perfect conformity to his divine will; and to make a trial of their fidelity and readineſs to obey, he commanded that they ſhould not *eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil upon pain of death.* This prohibition was upon moſt wiſe and juſt reaſons, and nothing could be more eaſie than the obſervation of it. [a] For in the midſt of an huge indulgence, and that large ſcope of all the trees in the garden, the divine Majeſty laid an interdict but upon one, ſaying, *of all the trees in the garden ye may freely eat, ſave only the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midſt of the garden; of that ye ſhall not eat leſt ye die.* Who could now think any thing ſhould become a temptation ſtrong enough to make them pre- *The firſt* Covenant. *The terms of it moſt juſt.*

[a] Præceptum de uno cibi genere non edendo, ubi aliorum tanta copia ſubjacebat, tam leve ad obſervandum, tam breve ad memoriâ retinendum, ubi præſertim nondum voluntati cupiditas reſiſtebat; tanto majori injuſtitiâ violatum eſt, quanto faciliori poſſet obſervantiâ cuſtodiri. *Aug. de Civit. Dei.*

Devil, *the motives of his tempting our first parents.* varicate from their duty? But the *Devil* (who was already fall'n by his pride, and could not consequently see, without envy, the fidelity and happiness of those two innocent creatures, which were more obedient and subject to God, tho' they were living upon earth, than he had been with all the advantages of his spiritual nature, and of his living in the presence of God in heaven) resolv'd to assault them, being very much exasperated at their felicity; insomuch, that his torment was capable of allay, only by rendring man as miserable as himself. The same envy which made him malign and hate the blessed orders above, (because he imagin'd he was not high enough advanc'd in the scale of the *heavenly Hierarchy*; and that his station in the ranks of angels was beneath the grandeur and dignity of his nature) push'd him on with a design to corrupt the innocence of our first parents, and to make them companions with him in his revolt. Being thus resolv'd, he contrives a temptation, which might be most taking and dangerous to man in his happy state; and his subtilty being equal to his malice, he came under the shape of a *serpent*, and set upon the woman, judging her the most likely to be prevail'd upon, and the most easy to be drawn into a compliance; and by this means insinuates his temptation. He says to the woman, *hath God said, you shall not eat of every tree in the garden?* As much as to say; "Is it not a mistake that you are forbid-
"den that fruit? Was that the meaning of the
"Almighty? Possibly your gracious Creator
"had no such intention: For why should you
"be restrain'd in this? Why not left perfectly
"to your own Election? Have not you facul-
"ties to choose, and desires to gratifie? Why
"should they be curb'd or deny'd? Sure he
"never

He addresses to the woman,

and accosted her after this manner.

" never made a power which was not to come
" into act, nor a capacity that was not to be
" satisfied! Nay, this one abridgement despoils
" you entirely of your liberty: Law and free-
" dom are incompatible: You are not us'd like
" sons if you be thus chain'd up. Pray, what
" necessity is there to set such a fence about
" that one tree above all the rest? Is it to ex-
" ercise authority arbitrarily over you, or to
" tempt your patience? Or rather, is there not
" some great good which he knows in that
" fruit, and envies you the participation of?
" Why should not you that were made in *his*
" *image*, be like Gods in this also, knowing
" *good and evil?*" After this manner the ene-
my of souls temper'd his poison, and *Eve* was
too easily seduc'd by these allurements: She *She is o-vercome.*
look'd upon the *forbidden fruit* with compla-
cency, and being captivated by the sight, sur-
veying it as pleasant to the Eye, was betray'd to
fancy it was so to the taste: thus she put forth
her hand, and swallow'd the deadly poison of
the *serpent*; and having tasted death, she per-
suaded her husband by the same motives to de-
spise the law of this Creator.

Thus sin enter'd and brought confusion into *The misery of man's fall'n state.*
the world: For as soon as *Adam* had tasted the
forbidden fruit, the peace and perfection of his
mind, the regularity of his will and affections,
and the spiritual power to obey God, were to-
tally abolish'd. Instead of the rectitude and ori-
ginal purity of the soul, succeeded a permanent
viciousness and corruption; and nothing re-
main'd of man's first innocence, but the vex-
atious regret of having lost it. God shew'd
himself to them no longer as an indulgent fa-
ther, whose presence was their joy and happi-
ness; but as an offended Lord, who reprov'd

their disobedience. He drove them both out of the terrestrial *paradise*, and subjected them to all the miseries of life: He pass'd the sentence of death upon them as he had threaten'd, condemning them not only to a temporal death of the body; for that transmits us to the second death, even the death of the soul, which is endless and unalterable.

The fatal consequences of it.

Every man, as descending from *Adam*, is born to this death; for the rebellion of the first man against the great Creator was a sin of universal comprehenfron, which derives a guilt and stain to mankind in all ages of the world. If *Adam* had continu'd in his innocence, all the advantages of it had been convey'd to his posterity; but by his rebellion he lost his primitive rectitude; and therefore the whole race of mankind are concluded in his sin and ruin. The fountain was poison'd in *Adam*, and all the streams partake of the infection: All that are deriv'd from him in a natural way, and have a relation to him as their common Father, draw something of corruption and contamination by their seminal traduction from him: And as his soul was stripp'd of its native righteousness and holiness, and stain'd with contrary qualities, so all his progeny are sharers in this depravation. This is what we call *original sin*, [b] because we are guilty of it from our *Original* and Birth: [c] And this is the sin which the *Fathers* call *unspeakable in its greatness*, because it brings upon us all those evils and miseries which we feel either in our souls or bodies. By this sin the favour of our God was forfeited, and we are all become by

Original sin.

[b] Vid. bishop *Taylor de peccat. origin.*

[c] Nascuntur non proprie, sed originaliter peccatores. *Aug. de civit. Dei.*

nature

nature the children of wrath, that is, liable to eternal punishment.

God's goodness eminently visible in the redemption.

But immediately after the fatal lapse of mankind, the same diffusive and boundless goodness, that first *breath'd into man the breath of life*, out of deep compassion to his creatures, (and that the *Devil* might not finally be victorious over them) in his council decreed the recovery of man from his languishing and miserable condition. Then did the Almighty lay that most astonishing scheme which the sublimest spirits in heaven with holy ardor continually *desire to look into*, (the belief of which the devils and wicked men industriously endeavour to evade) it being a work so extensive, that it is beyond all the tongues of Angels or men to express! God's mercy excited his wisdom to interpose as an *arbiter*; wisdom found out an expedient to save man; and that in such a miraculous manner as to reconcile infinite mercy with inflexible justice: So that *mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kiss'd each other.* This happy event was owing to the constituting a *Mediator* between the guilty creature and himself; that by transferring the punishment on the surety, he might punish sin, and pardon the Sinner. So he that created us by his power, restored us by his love; which certainly is the fairest copy of the divine wisdom and philanthropy! for much happier were it for us never to have been created, if this good God had not added this second and better benefit of our redemption. For by this we regain all those former advantages which sin had forfeited and lost; we are sav'd from that eternal destruction to which the other had made us liable; our faults are expiated by the astonishing satisfaction of the blood of God, and our ransom paid

by his bitter and opprobrious death upon the croſs. Now who could more fitly reſtore us to favour, than the *only beloved Son*, who is the ſingular and everlaſting object of his Father's delight? Or, who was more fit to repair the image of God in man, and beautifie his nature that was defil'd with ſin, than the *Son*, who is the *expreſs image of his Father's Perſon?* But, at the ſame time, who can worthily comprehend this ineſtimable goodneſs! this moſt amazing condeſcenſion! Or, what mind confin'd in fleſh can conceive the depth of that divine wiſdom which order'd the way of our ſalvation? Suppoſe we could graſp in the whole compaſs of nature, all the properties and varieties of being and motion, yet we ſhould find it impoſſible from thence to aſcend to the full comprehenſion of any one of God's attributes; much more from thence to the myſterious oeconomy of the divine Perſons; or the inexplicable work of man's redemption by the blood of the holy *Jeſus*. This is a height above the reach, and a depth beyond the fathom of all human capacity! nay, the Angels of light bend themſelves with extraordinary application of mind, and ardent affections, to ſtudy the rich and unſearchable myſtery that is in it; yet only the ſame underſtanding comprehends it which contriv'd it. And all that poor mortals can diſcover or know of it, is no more than what St. *Paul* mentions after he was *caught up to the third heaven:* He ſaw ſurprizing things, and heard ſtrange words, but they were ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα, words that he could not ſpeak, and ſecrets that he could neither comprehend nor communicate: He perceived that the glories were too big for fleſh and blood! So, in the like manner, no man can unfold the treaſures of this myſterious love; and all that we are able

Mercy of our redemption exceeds our comprehenſion.

able to know of it, is, that it ſurpaſſes knowledge.

But altho' this tranſcendent love of the holy *Jeſus* is as much above our comprehenſion as deſert; yet the unſpotted purity of his nature, and the illuſtrious example of holineſs which he diſplay'd in his converſation among us, are accommodated to our preſent ſtate. Indeed it was one great deſign of his coming into the world, to ſet before us in doing and ſuffering, not a mere object for our wonder, but a copy for our imitation, to be tranſcrib'd in our hearts and lives. This will appear more manifeſt by conſidering his deportment in every circumſtance of his life. For, as a creature in reſpect of his humanity, he never fail'd in the leaſt punctilio of that duty, homage, and devotion which he ow'd to the moſt high God his Creator. As a *man*, he never ſwerv'd either in his paſſions or appetites from the ſtricteſt rules of ſobriety and temperance; and as a *member of human ſociety*, he never was guilty of an unrighteous action either towards his ſuperiors, inferiors, or equals; but all his life was an unexampled pattern of goodneſs, and his whole converſation a moſt exact tranſcript of thoſe divine and heavenly laws which he gave to the world. Thus the *life of* Chriſt abounds with inſtances of all our duties towards God and man, and thoſe expreſs'd in the moſt perfect manner, or elſe contains motives to perform them: And therefore his engaging example claims our utmoſt attention, and ought to be regarded as the ſhorteſt way to perfection. The cauſes of all ſin may be reſolv'd into a deſire of thoſe things which *Chriſt* deſpis'd, or the fear of what he ſuffer'd: And tho' there be ſome actions of our *Saviour's* life which were not intended for our imitation,

Example of Chriſt *conſider'd and illuſtrated.*

It diſcovers our duty.

tation; *viz.* As when he exercis'd and asserted his divine authority, or comply'd with the observances of the *Jewish* law, *&c.* yet whatever he did of precise morality, he design'd and intended for our imitation; imposing nothing upon the world, but what is sweet, and easy, and full of grace. And hence himself tells us, ὁ ζυγός μου χρηστός, *my yoke is gracious, and my burthen is light.* His example recommends to us nothing but what is the proper grace and ornament of human nature; and what is every way accommodated to our present state and condition. He trod such a path of life as every one might imitate, taking care not to confound the capacities of men with inimitable expressions of sanctity; but comply'd with our weakness, and kept pace with our strength; that so he might incourage us all along with the indearments of his company, and the influence of his guidance.

And excites to perform it.

Christ's faithfulness in appointing officers in his Church.

And still, as a greater confirmation of his love and kindness to the souls of men, when, according to the divine oeconomy, he could no longer upon earth manage the interests of his Church in his own person; he promis'd and deputed the *Holy Ghost the Comforter*, and chose not to return back to heaven till he had constituted several officers therein, who might superintend its affairs, and according to the various circumstances of its state, administer to the needs and exigencies of his family. He first erected his sacred school, and when he was to leave it, he deposited a standing commission in the hands of his *Apostles*, whom he ordain'd to preside in it in his stead. These our Lord chose out of the rest, to devolve the government upon their shoulders, and to depute them for the first planting and settling christianity

ſtianity in the world. He ordain'd *twelve*, whom he nam'd Ἀπόστολοι, or *perſons ſent* up and down the world, as his immediate deputies and vice-gerents: They were to inſtruct mankind in the doctrines of the Goſpel, to *diſciple* the world, to *baptize* and initiate men into the faith of *Chriſt*, and to propagate that excellent religion which their Lord and Maſter had inſtituted. But concerning the *Apoſtles* travels, the ſucceſs of their miniſtry, the places and countries to which they went, the churches they planted, and their acts and martyrdoms for the faith, I ſhall give a compendious account in the following work. It may ſuffice at preſent to obſerve, in general, that they were *baptiz'd into the death of their great Maſter:* Their profeſſion and inſtitution was to live like him; and when his providence requir'd it, to die for him; or after his great example, to be *made perfect thro' ſufferings*. They had been eye-witneſſes of all the material paſſages of our *Saviour*'s life, continually converſant with him from the commencing of his publick miniſtry, till his aſcenſion into heaven: They had ſurveyed all his actions, ſeen all his miracles, obſerv'd the whole method of his converſation, and attended him in his moſt private ſolitudes and retirements; and conſequently knew what it was to *follow the Steps* of their great Maſter. They were ſenſible that God had open'd no gate of heaven but the *narrow gate*, to which the croſs was the key: And that *humility*, *mortification*, *ſelf-denial*, *repentance*, *renouncing the world*, and being *perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake*, ſtood in the chief rank of chriſtian precepts, and in the direct path to an *eternal weight of glory*. And therefore that they might be the diſciples of the holy *Jeſus*, they denied themſelves, took up

Apoſtle what it ſignifies.

Their reſignation and obedience.

up the croſs with pleaſure and ſatisfaction, and follow'd the captain of their ſalvation, and even *rejoic'd that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his name.* They were immutably reſolved to maintain their ſtation, notwithſtanding the various attempts made to beat them from it. They entertain'd the fierceſt threatnings with an unſhaken mind, and couragiouſly beheld the racks and engines prepared for them. They deſpiſed torments, and courted flames, and went out to meet death in its blackeſt dreſs. Their faith and hope were ſo invincible, that they regarded their executioners with the ſame eye, that St. *Peter* did the angel that broke off his fetters, and chearfully received them, as thoſe who brought the keys of *Paradiſe* in the ſame hands wherewith they preſented their ſwords. Of all the *Apoſtles* there was not one that dy'd a natural death, but only St. *John.* He eſcap'd, 'tis true, but he was caſt into a cauldron of ſcalding oil before the *Port-Latin* in *Rome*, and eſcap'd death by an aſtoniſhing miracle [d]: But beſides this he liv'd in baniſhment, and after a long and laborious life, he died full of days and ſufferings. St. *Paul* ſays of himſelf, and his brethren the other *Apoſtles*, that they ſerv'd God continually in *watchings*, in *faſtings*, in *hunger* and *thirſt*, in *cold* and *nakedneſs*; nay, his whole life was a continu'd act of ſuffering, *quotidie morior*, *I die daily*, was his *motto*, and the leſſon that he daily learn'd, was to know *Chriſt Jeſus and him crucified:* All theſe encounters he look'd upon only as neceſſary diſcipline for his virtue, to keep it in exerciſe and

[d] Miſſus in ferventis olei dolium —videbimus martyrio animum non defuiſſe; & bibiſſe *Joannem* calicem confeſſionis, quem & tres pueri in camino ignis biberant. *Hieron.* in *Matt.* xx.

vigour.

vigour. In the like manner did all the *Apoſtles* of our bleſſed Lord, by illuſtrious acts of virtue, unanimouſly endeavour ſo to adorn their chriſtian profeſſion, and to draw in proſelytes, not only to the name, but to the obedience of *Chriſt*. They maintain'd a chearful and uninterrupted courſe of religion, ſpending whole days and nights in prayer to God; and abandoning all thoughts of the world, except the converſion of it, employ'd their minds entirely in pious meditations; in regulating and raiſing their affections; and in putting themſelves into ſuch a frame of ſoul, as might beſt prepare them for the purity of thoſe bleſſed regions above, which they thought no ſeverities, no pains too great to obtain. *The univerſality of their obedience.*

Thus did thoſe bleſſed and renown'd ſouls heretofore demean themſelves; and all this they eſteem'd their duty for the more effectual ſubduing ſin, and maintaining a good conſcience, unſpotted, and unimpair'd. And that we may faſhion our lives by theſe glorious patterns, it has always been eſteem'd a pious and prudent appointment in all true churches, ancient and modern, to ſolemnize the memorial of *Chriſt*'s moſt beneficial *actions* and *paſſion*, with the imitable virtues of his *Saints* and *Martyrs*, upon ſet-times and annual revolutions; leſt thoſe perſons and things ſhould be utterly forgotten, that ought to be *had in everlaſting remembrance*. God hath appointed weekly, and his *Church* annual commemorations of the myſteries, means, and witneſſes of our redemption; to preſerve a ſolemn memory of thoſe ineſtimable benefits, which either by *Chriſt* himſelf, or by any of his bleſſed inſtruments, God hath beſtowed upon the world; and that we might conſider and joyfully acknowledge each particular mercy. The *The prudence of the Church in appointing* Holy-days.

Lord's

They are of excellent use.

Lord's day, for inſtance, is a time to be celebrated with great expreſſions of joy, as being the happy memorial of *Chriſt*'s reſurrection from the dead. And the reſt of the holy *Feſtivals* which we celebrate, have all relation to the ever-bleſſed *Jeſus*; and therefore they ought to be cloath'd with thoſe external robes of holineſs, whereby their difference from other days may be made ſenſible. "We begin our "eccleſiaſtical year (as the learned [e] *Hooker* "diſcourſes) with the glorious *annunciation* of "his birth by angelical embaſſage. Hereunto "are added his bleſſed *nativity* itſelf; the my-"ſtery of his legal *circumciſion*; the teſtification "of his true incarnation by the *purification* of "her who brought him into the world; his "*reſurrection* and *aſcenſion* into heaven; the ad-"mirable ſending down of his *Spirit* upon his "choſen; and (which conſequently enſued) "the notice of that incomprehenſible *Trinity* "thereby given to the church of God. Again, "foraſmuch as we know that *Chriſt* hath not "been only manifeſted great in himſelf, but

Saints days to be celebrated with joy.

"great in other his *Saints* alſo; (the days of "whoſe departure out of this world, are to the "church of *Chriſt* as the birth and coronation "days of *Kings* or *Emperors*) therefore eſpecial "choice being made of the very flower of all "occaſions in this kind, there are annual ſe-"lected times to meditate of *Chriſt* glorified "in them, which had the honour to ſuffer for "his ſake", and whoſe *deaths* are exceeding *precious in his ſight*. If then the memories of the *Saints* are precious to God, certainly they ought alſo to be ſo to us; and it cannot but be thought highly reaſonable, that thoſe ex-

[e] Eccl. Pol. *lib.* 5. §. 70.

cellent perſons, who by their piety and patience, their charity and zeal, made themſelves venerable whilſt they liv'd, ſhould now have their memories celebrated throughout the chriſtian world, infinitely beyond the glories of an *Alexander*, or the triumphs of a *Pompey* or a *Cæſar*. 'Tis true, as the beſt and uſefulleſt things may be perverted to bad purpoſes; ſo theſe anniverſary commemorations, tho' in their primitive inſtitution they were highly reaſonable and commendable, and excluded both prayer to, and for the Saints (*vid. Euſeb. Mart. Polycarp.*) yet thro' the folly and dotage of Men they were afterwards made to miniſter to great ſuperſtition and idolatry. Hence ſprung the doctrine and practice of *prayer* and *invocation of Saints*, which the *papiſts* frequently perform in the ſame words, and with the ſame addreſs as they uſe in the invocation of God himſelf. Particularly the bleſſed *Virgin* they adorn with the moſt glorious titles of God; and in her *pſalter* addreſs to her in the ſame forms of invocation, which *David* uſes in his *pſalms* to God: They ſtile her the *Lady Almighty*; the *Author of Mercy*; the *Queen of infinite Majeſty*; and the *Hope of all the world*: Praying that her *mercy may lighten upon them, as they do put their truſt in her*; and a great deal more to this purpoſe. Now, this is moſt palpable unrighteouſneſs towards God, to rob him thus of his divine prerogatives, and cloath his creatures with them in defiance of his Laws. But theſe things were utterly unknown to the ſimplicity of purer and better times, and therefore can be no juſt exception againſt our annual ſolemnities. For on thoſe days that derive their names from ſome principal action or paſſion of our *Saviour*, all the devotion is done to him whoſe name the day bear-

The abuſe of theſe memorials.

No juſt exception againſt the right uſe of them.

eth

beareth. And as for the others which are call'd by the name of ſome *Saint*, *Martyr*, *Evangeliſt*, or *Apoſtle*, no religious devotion or worſhip is paid to the creature, whoſe name the day beareth, [f] but to their and our Lord, whoſe ſpecial benefits deriv'd to his *Church* by thoſe excellent conveyances of his bounty and mercy, are upon ſuch anniverſary ſolemnities recounted and gratefully acknowledg'd. In thoſe days which concern the bleſſed *Virgin Mary*, we honour *Chriſt* whom ſhe bare: In St. *John Baptiſt*'s day we honour *Chriſt* whoſe forerunner he was: In the *Martyrs* days we honour *Chriſt* whoſe martyrs they were: On the days of the *Apoſtles* we honour *Chriſt* whoſe witneſſes they were appointed; and in the *Evangeliſts* days we honour *Chriſt* whoſe *amanuenſes* they were: So that on all theſe days we glorifie God. We deifie not *Saints*; [g] for they are not to be honour'd with any worſhip, either of invocation or adoration, but only with love, and imitation. We are to give hearty thanks to almighty God for his graces in them, particularly that they were made inſtruments of revealing to us *Chriſt Jeſus*, and the way of ſalvation, as the *Apoſtles* were by their preaching throughout the world. Thus are we oblig'd to act out of a religious obſervance to chriſtian diſcipline, and to expreſs our reverence to God, in thoſe ways and methods which he in his incomprehenſible wiſdom and goodneſs hath preſcrib'd.

How the Feaſts *and* Faſts *of the* Church *are to be kept.*

'Tis therefore the important concern of all perſons, diligently to obſerve in a prudent manner theſe ſet-times and ſolemn anniverſaries of devo-

[f] Sed uni Deo, & martyrum & noſtro. *Aug. de civit. Dei.*

[g] Sancti non ſervitute, ſed charitate honorandi; imitatione non adoratione. *Durandus.*

tion;

tion; for there is not one but is remarkably expreſſive of ſome peculiar virtue, as the whole ſcheme together engages us to be univerſally *holy in all manner of converſation*. Therefore let us hallow thoſe days ſet apart for God's ſervice, and ſuit the air and temper of our minds to the occaſions of joy and ſorrow. The *Lord's day* being the remembrance of a great and unſpeakable bleſſing, muſt be a day of joy, feſtivity, ſpiritual rejoicing, and thankſgiving. And the *nativity*, the *aſcenſion*, the deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* on the day of *Pentecoſt*, and the like, are days which we are to keep with ſolemn and particular thankſgiving for that ſpecial bleſſing we then remember. Likewiſe thoſe days that are ſet apart in memory of the bleſſed *Saints* are to be ſpent in meditating on thoſe examples of holy life they have given us, and in ſtirring up our ſelves to the imitation thereof. The days of *Faſting* and *Humiliation* we are to obſerve in ſuch manner as the *Church* directs, that is, in humbling our ſelves before God, and confeſſing our ſins; in ceaſing to do *evil*, and learning to do *well*; in exerciſing our ſelves in works of mercy, and in diſtributing our bread to the hungry; in *caſting off the works of darkneſs*, and *putting on the armour of light*.

A concluſion from the whole.

And now upon the whole, every man muſt needs acknowledge it a very great mercy that we have theſe ſet-times annually returning, to trim our lamps and dreſs our ſouls for eternity. For a Man cannot after a ſtate of ſin be inſtantly a Saint: The conſtant habit of well-doing is not got without the repetition of doing well; neither can virtue be made perfect but by the conſtant and repeated acts of virtue often practiſed. Therefore God and his *Church*

have appointed holy intervals, and have appropriated portions of our time for religion, that we may be call'd off from the world, and remember the end of our creation; that we may do honour to God, and think of Heaven with hearty purpoſes and reſolute endeavours to get thither. And whoever does uprightly ſet himſelf to make theſe uſes of the ſeveral *Holy days*, will have cauſe, by the benefit he ſhall find from them, to magnifie, praiſe and adore his God, while he has a being.

THE

THE FEASTS and FASTS OF THE CHURCH.

Morning. Pſalm *proper.* 8. 24. 118. 145. *Evening.* 92. 116. 147.

The LORD's DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Exod.* 31. 2 *Mark* 16. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. *Iſa.* 58. 2 *Rev.* 1.

TIME is a circumſtance inſeparable from religious actions as well as place; for man conſiſting of a ſoul and body, cannot always be actually engag'd in the ſervice of his great Creator; that's the happy privilege of the bleſſed Angels, and *ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*. So long as we are loaded with theſe houſes of clay, we muſt worſhip God according to our preſent ſtate, and conſequently of neceſſity have ſome determinate and particular ſeaſons to do it in. Now that man might not be left floating in uncertainty about a matter of ſo great importance, in all ages and nations men have been guided by the very dictates of nature, to pitch upon ſome ſolemn and ſtated times, wherein to aſſemble and meet together to perform the publick offices of religion. Of which, becauſe the *Lord's day* challenges the

Set-times *neceſſary to religious actions.*

precedency of all the reſt, I ſhall begin firſt with that. And laying aſide thoſe endleſs controverſies, which have no tendency either to make a man wiſer or better, I ſhall only endeavour briefly to eſtabliſh the obligation of the day, and the validity of its change from the *Jewiſh* to the *Chriſtian Sabbath*.

The Inſtitution of the Jewiſh Sabbath.

Sabbath in the original language ſignifies *reſt*, or ceſſation from labour. It was inſtituted by God himſelf, and given in command that it ſhould be kept holy by the ancient people the *Jews*, in commemoration of God's *Sabbath*, or reſting from the work of creation; and to put them in mind of their bondage in *Egypt*, and of God's miraculous delivering of them from it. 'Twas alſo call'd a ſign of the covenant between God and that people, whereby to ſeparate and diſtinguiſh them from all others. As God ſpake by *Moſes* to the *Iſraelites*, *verily my ſabbath ſhall ye keep, for it is a ſign between me and you throughout your generations, that ye may know that I am the Lord that do ſanctifie you*; (Exod. xxxi. 13.) a mark of diſtinction among the *Jews*, who were by this means known to worſhip that God whoſe name was *Jehovah*, who made the world, and deliver'd them from the hands of *Pharaoh*.

The reaſon of its Inſtitution.

There was therefore a double reaſon render'd by God, why the *Jews* ſhould keep their *Sabbath*; one moral, as to a ſeventh day, to ſhew they worſhipped that God who was the Creator of the world; the other perſonal, as to that ſeventh day, to ſignifie their deliverance from the *Egyptian* bondage.

Inſtitution of the Chriſtian Sabbath.

Now as the firſt inſtitution of the *Sabbath* was by divine authority, ſo likewiſe was the change of it. For as God reſted from his labour on the laſt day of the week; ſo *Chriſt the Lord of the Sabbath*, (Mark ii.) reſted from all his

his labour, ſorrows, and afflictions on this day, in which he fully compleated the work of our redemption, by his glorious reſurrection from the dead. The aboliſhing the Jewiſh Sabbath is moſt evident from *Col.* ii. 16. where ſpeaking of Jewiſh ordinances, he ſays, *let no man therefore judge you in reſpect of the Sabbath days:* And the appointment of the Lord's day may be inferr'd from 1 *Cor.* xvi. 2. where publick collections are order'd on *the firſt day of the week*; *i. e.* on the day of the fulleſt Chriſtian aſſemblies. It is not doubted that St. *John* refers to this when he mentions the *Lord's day*, *Rev.* i. 10. and St. *Ignatius*, St. *John*'s diſciple, calls this day the *Lord's day*, *the day of the reſurrection of* Chriſt, *the Queen and chiefeſt of days* [h]. And St. [i] *Barnabas* teſtifies, we obſerve the eighth day with gladneſs, in which *Jeſus* roſe from the dead. And well might that day, which carried with it a remembrance of that great deliverance from the *Egyptian* ſervitude, reſign all the ſanctity or ſolemnity due unto it, when that morning once appear'd, upon which a far greater redemption was confirm'd. Thus the obſervation of that day which the *Jews* did ſanctifie, ceas'd, and was bury'd with our *Saviour*; and inſtead thereof, the religious obſervation of that day on which the Son of God roſe from the dead, by the conſtant practice of the bleſſed *Apoſtles*, was tranſmitted to the Church of God, and ſo continued in all ages.

From this reſurrection of our *Saviour*, and the conſtant practice of the *Apoſtles*, this firſt

[h] Ἐορταζέτω πᾶς φιλόχριςος τὴν κυριακὴν, τὸν ἀναστάσιμον, τὴν βασιλίνδα, τὸν ὕπαλον πασῶν ἡμερῶν. *Ignat. ad Magneſ.*

[i] Barnabæ *Epiſt.* §. 15.

day of the week came to have the name of the *Lord's day*. It is ſometimes indeed (eſpecially by *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian*) call'd *Sunday*, becauſe it happen'd upon that day of the week, which by the *Heathens* was dedicated to the *Sun*, and therefore as being beſt known to them, ſeveral *Fathers* made uſe of it in their Apologies to the *heathen* Governors. But the more proper and prevailing Name is Κυριακὴ, or *Dies Dominica*, the *Lord's day*, as it is called by St. *John*, who ſays of himſelf (Rev. i. 10.) *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*. So that the *Judaical Sabbath* is now utterly aboliſh'd, and regarded under the Evangelical State, only as a day equal with others, or even as a *ſhadow that was vaniſh'd away*; and of no more concern to us than their *Circumciſion* and *Paſſover*, which *things were ſhadows of good things to come* (Col. ii. 17.) and therefore to diſappear when the ſubſtance was come.

Call'd the Lord's day, *and why.*

Stiled Sunday, *and why.*

The Jewiſh Sabbath *an antiquated rite,*

From the reſurrection then of *Chriſt*, the ſeventh day, or *Jewiſh Sabbath*, as being only typical and circumſtantial, expir'd. Accordingly we read of this day's being honour'd not only with the ſtupendious miracle of *Chriſt*'s triumphant return from the dead, but alſo with his appearances afterwards to *Mary Magdalen* and the other Women; then to the two Diſciples going to *Emmaus*, and his religious aſſembling with them there. After that to the Diſciples at *Jeruſalem*, giving them on this day commiſſion for preaching the Goſpel, and planting of Chriſtianity. Again, the firſt day of the week was likewiſe had in great veneration, and was moſt religiouſly obſerv'd by the *Apoſtles*. [k] On this day it was that they met

and the Chriſtian Sabbath *received in its ſtead.*

[k] Cave's *Prim. Chriſt.*

together

together when our *Saviour* firſt appear'd to them, and ſo again the next week after. On this day they were aſſembled when the *Holy Ghoſt* ſo viſibly came down upon them, when *Peter* preached that excellent Sermon, converting and baptizing *three thouſand ſouls*. Thus when St. *Paul* was taking his leave at *Troas*, *upon the firſt day of the week*, when the Diſciples came together to *break bread*, (*i. e.* to celebrate the holy Sacrament,) he preach'd to them, ſufficiently intimating that upon that day 'twas their uſual cuſtom to meet in that manner. And what is farther obſervable in relation to this day, is, [1] that the primitive Chriſtians always pray'd ſtanding, (as is affirm'd by *Juſtin Martyr* and *Tertullian*) the reaſon of which was, that they might be put in mind both of their fall by ſin, and their reſurrection or reſtitution by the grace of *Chriſt*: That for ſix days we pray on our knees (ſay they) is in token of our fall by ſin; but that on the *Lord's day* we do not bow the knee, does ſymbolically repreſent our reſurrection, by which through the grace of *Chriſt*, we are deliver'd from our ſins, and the powers of death. Now put but the force of all the premiſſes together, and they will certainly amount to the full proof of the validity of the Chriſtian *Sabbath*: So that we may ſafely conclude the ever-bleſſed *Jeſus* hath ſanctified this day by his reſurrection; and the *Apoſtles* confirm'd the obſervation of it, both by their writings and uniform practice; and therefore it hath ſuch an inviolable ſtamp of divinity upon it, that now it is no more alterable to the end of the World.

The validity thereof.

[1] Loc. *ſupr. citat.*

Epiſtle. Rom. 15. ℣ 4. *to* 14.

Practical MEDITATIONS FROM THE Preceding Diſcourſe.

Goſpel, Luke 21. ℣ 24. *to* 34.

God *made the World to illuſtrate his glory.*

TO honour and glorifie the great *Creator of Heaven and Earth*, as 'tis the end, ſo is it the duty and privilege of all the rational and intellectual part of the Creation. God indeed has made all things for his glory, and there is nothing ſo mean and deſpicable upon Earth, that does not carry in it the characters of the divine perfections: But *Man*, tho' not ſo capable of an uninterrupted contemplation of the divinity, as ſome of the other intellectual orders are; yet has as much, perhaps more obligation to praiſe and adore his Maker, than any of them all; ſince God has not only favour'd him with ſuch ſublime and tranſcendent benefits, as *Grace*, *Redemption*, and *Repentance*, &c. but has alſo plac'd him in a ſphere where he is the only creature that can actively pay religious ſervice to his great Creator and Benefactor. Juſtly therefore does he require the homage of our adoration and worſhip, and that we ſhould ſet apart one day in ſeven from all other employments, to be ſpent in contemplating, praiſing, and adoring his incomprehenſible wiſdom and goodneſs! The Almighty, when he had finiſh'd the Creation, ordain'd the ſeventh day, as a *Sabbath*, or day of reſt, that all created nature might ſolemnly aſcribe to him the glory of his divine attributes; *but* when he rais'd the holy *Jeſus* from the dead, he conſecrated the firſt day to his ſervice and praiſe, there being the brighteſt illuſtration of his perfections in that bleſſed

Man *under a particular obligation of doing ſo.*

The Lord's day *to be ſpent in religious duties.*

bleſſed work. In this the divine power appears in its magnificence, and far more glorious than in the Creation: Nay, the divine goodneſs and power are here diſplay'd in their utmoſt elevation and extent; and with reſpect to us, redemption from miſery and diſtreſs is a more beneficial act than our firſt creation, becauſe it is better and more deſirable not to be, than to be miſerable: And God himſelf is more pleas'd in the contemplation of the new world, than of the old. The one by its extraordinary magnificence has leſſen'd the dignity of the other, as the greater light obſcures the leſs: Therefore in the reaſon of the thing the *Sabbath* gives place to the *Lord's day*. So that that man muſt be inexcuſable who is unaffected with this glorious mercy, wherein he may always diſcover new cauſe of admiration! Since then the great deſign of our bleſſed *Saviour*'s dying for our ſins, and riſing again from the dead on this day, was to advance our natures to ſuch a ſublime degree of purity and perfection as is requiſite to capacitate us for the enjoyment of heavenly bliſs, it will be very ſeaſonable to conſider wherein the due ſanctification of the *Lord's day* conſiſts: And here beſides our reſting from the drudgery of the world and the ſlavery of ſin, the poſitive duties may be reduc'd to theſe;

1. Reading the holy *Scriptures*. It is plain that the great deſign of writing the holy *Scriptures* was to inſtruct men in the knowledge, and perſuade them to the practice of true religion; for thus of the *Scriptures* of the Old Teſtament, St. *Paul* tells us, that *whatſoever things were written afore-time, were written for our learning*, (Rom. xv. 4.) And as for the New Teſtament, we are told that it was written, *Reading the holy Scriptures.*

that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing we might have life thro' his Name, (John xx. 31.) For this Gospel was probably the last canonical book of the New Testament, or at most the *Revelation* of St. *John* was only written after it. These are ends for which the holy *Scriptures* were written, and therefore they are worthy our most serious thoughts and application: And what answers these great ends must be a proper exercise and ingredient towards sanctifying this day. But to incite us to the constant use of these divine *Oracles* of truth on this blessed day, let us farther consider those excellencies which will render it most desirable. And first, if wisdom be an inviting tender; the *Apostle* tells us, that the *Gospel* contains all the *treasures of wisdom and knowledge*. It acquaints us with that supream felicity, that chief good whereof *philosophy* could only give us a name; and it shews the means, marks out the path which will infallibly leads us to it. The *Gospel* is likewise call'd a *marvellous light*, (1 Pet. ii. 9.) upon account of the sublimity and greatness of the object it discovers; which is no less than the highest design of the eternal wisdom, the most glorious work of the great God. In the creation his foot-steps appear; in our redemption his image; in the law his justice and holiness; but in the *Gospel* all his perfections shine forth in their greatest lustre! and therefore without it the most refin'd speculations, all the ostentation and pride of life are totally insignificant. Again, if reputation be desirable, we cannot take a more compendious course to acquire it, than by *searching the Scriptures*, if we copy its directions. *Solomon* tells us, *the wise shall inherit glory*. (Prov. iii. 38.) And the virtuous woman is *prais'd*

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in the gate. (Prov. xxxi. *ult.*) Nay, this bleſſing is extended even beyond the preſent life: The very *memory of the juſt ſhall be bleſſed.* (Prov. x. 7.) Nor does the *Goſpel* vacate this promiſe; but rather informs us in the way of having it made good to us, by adviſing us to *abſtain from all appearance* [or kind] *of evil,* (1 Theſ. v. 22.) and to *provide for honeſt things, not only in the ſight of God, but alſo in the ſight of men.* (2 Cor. viii. 21.) And if the immenſe glories, and felicities of a never-fading crown can engage our affections, the holy *Writ* aſſures us, that they are prepared in the world above, for the reward of all thoſe, *who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, and eternal life.* (Rom. ii. 7.) Certainly theſe are terms ſo apparently advantagious, that he muſt be notoriouſly ſtupid that will not lay aſide one day in ſeven to conſult the word of God, which means him ſo much good, which tends to make him live here according to the dignity of his nature; and in the next world to exalt that nature, and render it more capable of thoſe refin'd and incomprehenſible joys, which there await thoſe who will qualify themſelves for them. Doubtleſs it muſt work in us ſuitable and pious diſpoſitions to be one day in ſeven ſequeſtred from the world, and employ'd in theſe ſacred volumes, enriching our ſelves with the divine treaſures, and furniſhing our minds with a competent ſtock of evangelical knowledge. And if we would thus ſpend our *Lord's day,* we ſhould experimentally find the holy *Scriptures* to be the moſt valuable writings in the world: They would ſoon become the matter of our moſt pure and chaſte delight, and we ſhould think we could never fully enough underſtand them,

them, or deeply enough imprint them upon our hearts and memories. They would fortifie our reſolutions, and make our graces more vigorous; and whereas the *Jews* were to gather *Manna* enough on their ſixth day, to feed their Bodies on the enſuing *Sabbath*, ſo we ſhould gather *Manna* enough upon our Chriſtian *Sabbath*, to feed and ſtrengthen our ſouls all the ſix days after.

Publick Prayer.

2. But *ſecondly*, A great and principal part of the ſanctification of the *Lord's day* doth conſiſt in the *publick worſhip* of God; for this hath been ever accounted the indiſpenſible proper employment of a *Sabbath*. Becauſe (in the language of an excellent writer) no part of divine worſhip doth ſo much expreſs and advance God's glory, nor ſo directly tend to man's good as *publick prayer*; in which we make the moſt univerſal ſolemn acknowledgments of our obligations unto, and dependance upon, the ſupreme Lord of all the world; and by which all the ſervants of God in all times, places, and circumſtances, do with heart and voice, by common conſent [m] reveal their wants, and obtain ſupplies for them. So that we may call this the life and ſoul of religion, the *anima mundi*, that univerſal ſoul which quickens, and animates the whole Chriſtian diſpenſation. *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* [n] tells us how punctual and zealous the primitive Chriſtians were to ſanctifie this day with their publick devotions: Who therefore did not think it enough to read and pray, and praiſe God at home, but made con-

[m] Publica eſt nobis & communis oratio, & quando oramus, non pro uno, ſed pro toto populo oramus; quia totus populus unum ſumus. *Cyprian.*

[n] Cave's *Prim. Chriſt.*

ſcience

ſcience of appearing in the publick aſſemblies; from which nothing but ſickneſs and abſolute neceſſity did ever detain them, and that never without great ſorrow. We come together (ſays *Tertullian*) unto God, that being united as 'twere in an army, we may beſiege him with our prayers and petitions; a violence which without doubt is very pleaſing and grateful to the Almighty. Agreeably hereunto, the great convert St. *Auſtin*, highly values the privilege of God's houſe, becauſe there he finds himſelf fortified and encouraged by the great examples of holy men, his prayers ſtrengthen'd by the concurrence of all good people; there he is under the publick diſpenſations of the means of grace and knowledge, the very plainneſs and ſimplicity of which he admires more than all the *Greek* or *Roman* eloquence of ſpeech, or ſubtilty of *philoſophy*, to which every thing ſeem'd flat and inſipid before. And add to all this the excellency of that proviſion, which is made for thoſe who frequent the *publick worſhip*. "All Churches in the world have, and "ever had forms of prayer, (as a learned commentator on the *Liturgy* diſcourſes.) "Yet "none was ever bleſſed with ſo comprehenſive, "ſo exact, and ſo inoffenſive a compoſure; "which is ſo *judiciouſly* contriv'd, that the "wiſeſt may exerciſe at once their knowledge "and devotion; and yet ſo *plain*, that the "moſt ignorant may pray with underſtanding: "So *full*, that nothing is omitted, that is fit "to be ask'd in publick; ſo *particular*, that it "compriſes moſt things which we would pray "for in private; and yet ſo *ſhort*, as not to "tire any that have true devotion. Its *Doctrine* "is pure and primitive; its *Ceremonies* ſo few "and innocent, that moſt of the Chriſtian "world

The excellency of the Liturgy *illuſtrated.*

" world agree in them; its *method* is exact and " natural; its *language* is ſignificant and perſpi- " cuous, moſt of the words and phraſes being " taken out of holy *Scripture*, and the reſt are " the expreſſions of the firſt and beſt ages: So " that whoever takes exceptions at theſe, muſt " quarrel with the language of the *Holy* " *Ghoſt*, or fall out with the Church in her " greateſt innocence." All this muſt needs demonſtrate the reaſonableneſs of our conſtant attendance on *publick worſhip*, and eſpecially on the *Lord's day*, ſince the Liturgy itſelf thus appears in its ſuperior majeſty and luſtre; and ſince the uſe of it is ſo apparently advantageous to mankind. Let us then conſtantly ſet apart this bleſſed *day which the Lord hath made*, for the *publick worſhip* and adoration of him that *made it*. Then we ſhall experience that the firſt day of the week in God's houſe is inconceivably better to us, than all the days of the week in any other place, or about any other imployment.

Family Prayer. 3. But to proceed *Thirdly*, It is the duty of every perſon, in order to the ſanctification of the *Lord's day*, never to omit ſpending ſome time in religious worſhip in the *Family*; where all that are members of it may join in their common ſupplications. A Chriſtian *Family* ſhould be the epitome of a Church; and every maſter or governor thereof, is indiſpenſibly bound to keep up the eſteem and practice of religion in it. He is ſet as a *watchman* over his family, and ought as jealouſly to obſerve the approach of any vice towards it, as a *centinel* does that of an enemy. *Joſhua* undertakes no leſs for the piety of his *houſhold* than himſelf; *As for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*, (Joſh. xxiv. 15.) And ſure 'tis but reaſonable,

reaſonable, that where we our ſelves owe an homage, we ſhould make all our dependents acknowledge the ſame. Beſides, 'tis highly unjuſt to do otherwiſe; for when we entertain a ſervant, we take the whole perſon into our care and protection, and then 'twill appear a piece of enormous unfaithfulneſs to neglect this charge, by ſuffering his ſoul, the moſt precious part of him, to periſh. If then we think our ſelves in juſtice bound to feed and cloath the body of our child or ſervant, (the body which within a few days, in deſpight of all our care and pains, will diſſolve into inſenſibility and rotteneſs) certainly we muſt think it infinitely more unjuſt to be regardleſs of that immortal being within him, which muſt be the ſubject of an everlaſting happineſs or miſery. For by neglecting to inſtruct and educate our families in religion, and to implore God's pardon for all the errors of their lives paſt, we deny them the moſt neceſſary thing in the world, even that which is the food and raiment of their ſouls; without which they cannot live, but muſt neceſſarily ſtarve and famiſh for ever. And if ſo, Lord! what a dreadful account ſhall we have to give when we come to appear at the great tribunal? where the blood of our children and of our ſervants ſouls ſhall join with our own perſonal guilt, to cry aloud for vengeance againſt us. Wherefore let us take heed in time, and rejoice, and be exceeding glad, that we have one day in ſeven ſet apart, and diſengag'd from ſecular affairs, wherein we may employ our time in worſhipping and adoring our great Creator, not only in the publick *aſſembly of his ſaints*, but with all thoſe that are *round about us*; wherein we may enlighten the minds of thoſe committed to our charge, with all thoſe principles

principles of religion, which are neceſſary to conduct them to eternal happineſs: And here all works of charity and mercy are imply'd.

Private Prayer.

4. But we muſt know in the *fourth* place, that family devotion, tho' of excellent effect cannot commute for the omiſſion of *private* or *ſecret prayer:* For therein likewiſe doth the ſanctification of the *Lord's day* conſiſt. For the dedicating part of a day to the Almighty, is not ſuch a *Sabbath* as God requires; but it is an attendance on his worſhip and ſervice, the whole day in proper ſeaſons, willingly loſing no opportunity, and ſedulouſly redeeming and contriving to improve them from early to late, as we are wont to do on our ſix days labour, without defrauding God of any part of his time, who has reſerv'd ſo little for himſelf. It would be a very unbecoming partiality, to make long days in ſerving our ſelves, and but ſhort ones for the ſervice of God. Beſides, prayer is the powerful engine by which we draw down bleſſings; 'tis the key which lets us into the immenſe ſtore-houſe of the Almighty; nay, 'tis that upon which the ſucceſs of all our actions depends: And then certainly we cannot think much of employing one day in ſeven in this ſo advantagious, ſo honourable an employment. For if the expence of time be (as the *Philoſopher* ſaid) πολυτελέστατον ἀνάλωμα, *the moſt precious expence* that can be; how can it be laid out better than in converſing with the great King of heaven and earth? Such a converſation tends to make our faces ſhine like that of *Moſes*; and to transform us into the divine likeneſs *from glory to glory*.

Praiſe and thankſgiving.

5. *Fifthly*, Another duty wherein the ſanctification of the *Lord's day* doth conſiſt, is *praiſe* and *thankſgiving*. For this day being a feſtival unto God, a *day* of ſpiritual joy and gladneſs, how

how can we better teſtifie our joy than by *Praiſe* and *Thankſgiving*? The holy Angels and Spirits of juſt men in Heaven, are ſaid to ſing eternal *Hallelujahs* unto the great King; and if our *Sabbath* be typical of Heaven, and the work of the *Sabbath* repreſents to us the everlaſting work of thoſe glorious Spirits, how can it better be perform'd than when we are chanting forth anthems of praiſe? Surely that which is ſo much the employment and buſineſs of Heaven, ought highly to be valued upon Earth; and what the Angels eſteem ſo divine a ſervice, ought to have a great ſhare in the devotions of men. Methinks it ſhould be a moſt tranſporting delight to us to be employ'd in the praiſe of that great and glorious God, by whoſe inexhauſtible fountain of goodneſs we enjoy all the bleſſings of Life, and by whoſe omnipotent agency, we are preſerv'd from ſinking into our original nothing. The mercies beſtowed upon all the world in one day, (ſays an eminent writer) are above human arithmetick, and the bleſſings which one ſingle man enjoys in the whole courſe of his life, do tranſcend the bounds of numeration: What an amazing ſum therefore would all the mercies make, which all men in all ages have receiv'd! The infinite and inconceivable Myriads command us into ſilence and adoration, and it is the employment of Angels and glorified Souls to enumerate them in the regions of eternity; yea, and Heaven it ſelf ſeems to be deſign'd on purpoſe, that we might ſupply the defect of our imperfect earthly praiſes, and fully give glory to God for all the acts of his goodneſs, which it will require an everlaſting duration to recount. So that we now perceive, that the moſt ample and glorious praiſes that poor mortals can give him, are imcomparably

ſhort of what is owing to his infinite excellencies and perfections; the moſt thankful acknowledgments we can make him, are but poor compoſitions for thoſe vaſt ſums which we owe to his ſtupendious bounty and liberality. But notwithſtanding our gracious God is pleas'd with a thankful heart, and this, (tho' a poor requital for his unparallel'd bounty,) is well accepted by that independent Being, who is eſſentially happy in himſelf: Therefore, *praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul! and forget not all his benefits.*

Celebration of the holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

6. *Laſtly*, Another important duty, wherein the ſanctification of the *Lord's day* doth conſiſt, is the celebration of the moſt holy *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*. This is an ordinance inſtituted on purpoſe by our bleſſed *Saviour*, for the improving and furthering us in our Chriſtian warfare; which were it frequented with that wiſe and due preparation that it ought to be, would doubtleſs be highly inſtrumental to reform the world, and to give new life to piety and virtue: For the holy *Euchariſt* being by all juſtly accounted the higheſt of divine ordinances, conſequently thoſe who think of no preparation in other inſtances, have ſome general impreſſions of the neceſſity of it in this; ſo that were there no other benefit deriv'd from it, ſave that which the preparation implies, 'twere very conſiderable. It brings us to a recollection (as the *author* of the *Whole Duty of Man* obſerves) fixes our indefinite purpoſes of ſearching and trying our ways, which elſe perhaps we ſhould infinitely defer, ſtops our career in ſin, and by acquainting us with our ſelves, ſhews us where our danger lies, and how we are to avert it; what breaches are made upon our ſouls, and how we muſt repair them; all which are ſeldom thought of, but when the time

time of communicating approaches. Yet this is not all the advantage the holy *Euchariſt* affords; it contains yet greater and more intrinſick benefits, (in the language of the ſame excellent author) 'tis a ſpring of aſſiſting grace alſo: 'Tis a magazine of ſpiritual artillery to fortifie us againſt all aſſaults of the *Devil*, the great *Catholicon* for all the maladies of our ſouls, that which (if duly receiv'd) will qualifie us to make St. *Paul*'s boaſt, *I can do all things thro'* Chriſt *which ſtrengthens me.* (Phil. iv. 13.) In a word, 'tis to us whatever we need, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption, becauſe it poſſeſſes us of him who is ſo. (1 *Cor.* i. 31.) And whenever we neglect it, we manifeſtly betray our own intereſt, and do implicitly chooſe death, whilſt we run thus from life.

Thus we ſee there is a concurrence of all ſorts of arguments for the ſanctification of the *Lord's day*, and therefore let us reſolve to ſpend it in the diligent practice of all theſe ſubſtantial parts of religion. Let us repreſent to our minds the glorious attributes of the Almighty, conſpicuouſly diſplay'd in the frame, order, and government of the world; his aſtoniſhing power which erected this great and admirable ſtructure; his incomprehenſible wiſdom, which preſerves it in a conſtant harmony; and his immenſe goodneſs, which hath ſo carefully provided for the various neceſſities, comforts, and delights of its innumerable inhabitants. But above all let us return moſt humble and hearty thanks (as the wiſdom of our *Church* directs us) *for his ineſtimable love in the redemption of the world by our* Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *for the means of grace, and for the hopes of glory.* *The Concluſion.*

The PRAYER.

O Almighty and moſt glorious Lord God! infinitely great! and infinitely holy! I praiſe, I magnifie, I adore thy divine Majeſty for all thoſe ſtupendious benefits thou haſt beſtowed upon me thy unworthy ſervant: Particularly for creating me after thine own divine image, and providing all things on Earth for my uſe and ſuſtenance. For preſerving me through all the various accidents of life, and giving me an immortal ſoul capable of living eternally in thy glorious preſence. But above all, O thou overflowing ſpring of endleſs love! how ſhall I worthily celebrate thy praiſe for thine ineſtimable mercy in the redemption of the world, by our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt? O that it were in my power to make ſome ſuitable return, for love which paſſes not my thanks only, but even my knowledge! O! that my ways were made ſo direct, that my whole life might be one continued act of gratitude and obedience! O! that I could ſpend the remaining part of my days in prayers and praiſes, and thankful commemorations of the myſterious methods of man's redemption; that moſt ſtupendious, moſt conſpicuous, and everlaſting monument of the divine mercy! Bleſſed God! do thou from this very moment poſſeſs my whole heart, preſide over every faculty, direct my underſtanding, exalt my affections, and quench the thirſt of my longing ſoul, with thoſe tranſporting* rivers of pleaſure, which flow at thy right hand for evermore. *For how pure, O Lord! how ſweet, how exquiſite are the pleaſures which thou haſt* prepared for them that love thee? *No tongue can worthily expreſs the wondrous joys, and raviſhing extaſies, which fill thoſe pious ſouls enflam'd with the love, and employ'd in the contemplation of thee, my God! But ſince I am not*

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at preſent capable of honouring thee in the ſame manner as thy bleſſed Saints above, in uninterrupted anthems of praiſe; I will do what mortality is capable of, and join my heart and voice with thoſe whom thou haſt already admitted to thy glorious Kingdom, in hymns of joy and thanſgiving; ſaying, with all the company of heaven, glory to the Father, *whoſe wiſdon created me; glory to the* Son, *whoſe love redeemed me; glory to the* Holy Ghoſt, *whoſe graces ſanctified me; glory to the Almighty and Undivided* Trinity, *whoſe works are inſeparable, and dominion without end. To thee belongs praiſe, and thankſgiving, and honour and bleſſing; and therefore all honour, and power, and thanks, and praiſe be unto thee, O Lord moſt high! for ever and ever.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

BLeſſed Lord! which haſt caus'd all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant that I may in ſuch wiſe hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt them, that by patience and comfort of thy holy word, I may embrace, and ever hold faſt the bleſſed hope of everlaſting life, which thou haſt given in my Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

Morning. Pſalms *proper,* 89. 96.

Evening. 97. 98.

ADVENT-SUNDAY.

Morning, 1 Leſſ. *Iſa.* 1. 2 Leſſ. *Ep. of Jud.* *Evening,* 1 Leſſ. *Iſai.* 2. 2 *Pet.* 3.

Advent-Sunday, *the meaning thereof*

THIS day begins the holy time of [a] *Advent*; a ſeaſon wherein the *Church* calls upon all the faithful to prepare for the celebration of the great feſtival at *Chriſtmas* now approaching. It is then we renew the memory of *Chriſt*'s birth, and prepare our ſelves to acknowledge with the higheſt joy and gratitude the infinite mercy of *Chriſt*'s manifeſtation in the fleſh; on which mercy our everlaſting well-being depends. And that we may be truly ſenſible how much it is our intereſt to make this improvement of it, the *Church* at this ſeaſon farther calls us off from the buſie care of ſecular greatneſs, and lays before us the terrors of *Chriſt*'s ſecond coming at the laſt and general *judgment*, particularly admoniſhing us of our *Lord's* judicial *Advent:* Of which great and fundamental article of our faith I ſhall endeavour to give a brief account.

Muſt be entertained with joy.

Chriſt's *judicial* Advent *conſider'd.*

There is no one propoſition more frequently and plainly aſſerted in holy *Scripture*, than that our *Saviour* ſhall judge the World. But before he actually appears, he will give it a fearful warning of his coming, by hanging out to its publick view a great many terrible ſigns and ſpectacles; for thus St. *Jerom* tells us of an ancient tradition of the *Jewiſh Doctors*, that for fifteen days together before the general *Judgment*, there ſhall be tranſacted upon the ſtage of na-

The ſigns *and* fore-runners *thereof.*

[a] *So called,* ab Adventu Domini in Carnem.

ture

ture a continued ſcene of fearful ſigns and wonders; the *Sea* ſhall ſwell to a prodigious height, the *Heavens* ſhall eccho with thunder, the *Earth* ſhall groan under hideous convulſions, and be ſhaken with quotidian earthquakes; the *Moon* ſhall eject purple ſtreams of diſcolour'd light, the *Sun* ſhall be cloath'd in a diſmal darkneſs, and the *Stars* ſhall ſhrink in their light; the *Air* ſhall blaze with portentous comets, and the whole *frame of Nature*, like a funeral-room, ſhall be all hung round with mourning, and with enſigns of horror! In the cloſe of theſe dreadful alarms, our *Saviour* will deſcend in perſon from thoſe high habitations of inacceſſible light, cloath'd in that celeſtial body which he now wears at the *right hand of God*; beſides which the *Scripture* tells us, that he ſhall alſo come in *the glory of the Father:* Which being added to the eſſential brightneſs and luſtre of his own glorified body, will cauſe him to outſhine the *Sun*, and drown all the lights of Heaven in the conquering brightneſs of his appearance. His retinue will conſiſt of innumerable myriads of *Saints* and *Angels*, and of the *ſpirits of juſt men made perfect*, to miniſter to him in this great tranſaction. Then will he mount his Throne in Majeſty, (as ſome think over-againſt mount *Olivet*, the place from whence he *aſcended*) whither all *people*, *nations* and *languages* ſhall be gather'd before him to give an account of their actions, and to receive their everlaſting doom: Tho' 'tis plain from *Scripture* they are not to be *judg'd* promiſcuouſly as they come, but the *ſheep* are to be ſeparated from the *goats*, the *righteous* from the *wicked*, and to be tried and ſentenc'd apart from one another.

The manner of our Saviour's *appearance to* judgment.

Who are to be judged.

In this allotment the precedency will be given to the *righteous*, who are to be *judg'd* firſt;

The judgment of the righteous.

they will be ſummon'd by the ſound of a *trumpet* preceding from the *Arch-Angel's* mouth; and together with this mighty *voice* or *trump*, there will proceed from *Chriſt* a divine power, even his *Holy Spirit*, by which he himſelf aroſe from the dead, by whoſe omnipotent agency all thoſe holy reliques of the bodies of his *Saints*, which are now ſcatter'd about the world, ſhall be gather'd, re-united, and re-organiz'd into glorious bodies. Every diſtant particle of corrupted fleſh will be reſtor'd to its own *body*, and thus re-aſſembled, admit its long departed *ſoul*; for ſo the *Apoſtle* attributes *the reſurrection of the body* to the *Holy Ghoſt*; *for if the Spirit of him that rais'd up* Jeſus *from the dead dwell in us, he that rais'd up* Chriſt *from the dead, ſhall alſo quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.* (Rom. viii. 11.) The ſcatter'd materials of their bodies being thus rendezvous'd by the powerful energy of the *Holy Ghoſt*, accompanying the ſound of the *Arch-angel's trump*; thoſe *ſaintly Spirits*, which formerly inhabited them, ſhall ſeverally re-enter their own proper bodies, and animate them with immortal vigour and activity: And whilſt the dead *Saints* are thus ariſing, thoſe who ſhall then be alive, ſhall by the ſame omnipotent power be chang'd, transform'd, and glorified *in the twinkling of an eye!* which being tranſacted, they ſhall all be gather'd together before this glorious *Tribunal*, to undergo a merciful trial. Here ſhall the *glorious company of the Apoſtles*, and *goodly fellowſhip of the Prophets*, the *noble army of Martyrs*, the *holy Church throughout the World*, meet, and in one entire body preſent themſelves before their bleſſed *Redeemer*, to undergo an impartial trial of the deeds done in the body, that ſo they may receive a reward pro-

The perſonal appearance.

portionable

portionable to them. Thus the *righteous* will be try'd as well as the *wicked*, becauſe the Almighty *Judge* will diſtribute different degrees of *happineſs*, according to the different degrees of *perfection*. Not but that the darkeſt ſecrets of all hearts lie open to the All-ſeeing eye! but yet for other reaſons the *righteous* will undergo a trial as well as the *wicked*. As for inſtance, the juſt *Judge* will publickly vindicate their wrong'd innocence, notwithſtanding all the infamy and ſcandal wherewith they have been aſpers'd by their malicious enemies: And likewiſe all thoſe heroick acts of ſecret *Piety* and *Charity*, to which none but God and themſelves were conſcious, will be brought into open light, and expos'd to the publick view and general applauſe of *Saints* and *Angels*. And this will greatly contribute to the joys and comforts of that *day*, will be ſo great an illuſtration of the divine goodneſs, that it will cauſe the whole congregation of the *bleſſed*, admiringly to behold the infinte extent of his incomprehenſible love. So *Chriſt* having proclaimed their integrity, to their everlaſting renown, throughout all the vaſt aſſembly of *Spirits*, he will out of his throne of glory pronounce to thoſe on his *right-hand*, "*Come ye bleſſed children* *Their ſen-*
"*of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared* *tence.*
"*for you from the beginning of the World.* Their Bleſſed *Judge* thus pronouncing them *bleſſed*, they will doubtleſs all immediately reſound a joyful Choir of *Hallelujahs* through *Heaven* and *Earth*, and being fill'd with a rapturous love, will cry out, *Allelujah, ſalvation, and glory, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments! Salvation be unto our Lord that ſitteth on the throne. For wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty! Juſt and true are thy ways,*

ways, O thou King of Saints! After this manner will their praiſes be reverberated throughout the *Heavens*, upon the completion of their felicity, to all eternity. Their *bodies* will be as vigorous and active as their *ſouls*, as nimble and expedite as their thoughts and wiſhes, and ſo they will inſtantly take wing, and mount the *Heavens*, where they will quench their thirſt, and ſatisfie their boundleſs deſires, with the free and eaſie, but ſtill freſh diſcoveries of the infinite glories and perfections of their great *Creator*. Their apprehenſions will be render'd ſo unſpeakably quick and penetrating that they will eaſily diſcern the dependence and connexion of things, without any puzling diſcourſe, or laborious deduction. And their underſtandings being thus exalted, they will peruſe that infinite volume of the divine being and perfections, with admirable complacency and delight! And this will cauſe them to chant forth their praiſes without intermiſſion or diſtraction of thought. And now how exquiſitely, and inalterably happy muſt thoſe bleſſed Souls be, whoſe continu'd employment will be to bear a part in that tranſporting *muſick*, and thoſe divine *compoſitions* which publiſh the myſteries and glories of the undivided *Trinity!* Certainly their minds will be raviſh'd with admiration, and expatiate without bounds or limits. For all that can *careſs* our powers, that can *raviſh* our hearts, all that is *good*, all that is *lovely* and *deſirable*, are there in their greateſt perfection, and compendiouſly to be enjoy'd. So that it is in vain for a mortal to go about to expreſs the tranſcendency of this joy, which no *tongue* can utter, nor any *pen* deſcribe; *we ſee but in part*, and yet we can *think* a great deal more than we can *ſpeak*; but we ſhall then *feel* what the greateſt Divine cannot now

Their aſſumption into Heaven.

And their everlaſting happineſs.

now *conceive*, when every *face* ſhall ſhine with chearfulneſs, every *eye* ſparkle with joy, every *heart* overflow with gladneſs, and every *mouth* be fill'd with *Hallelujah!*

But the conſummation of the joyful trial of the *righteous* will be a preparative to a moſt dreadful ſolemnity, and that is the condemnation of the *wicked*. For no ſooner are they ſummon'd by the voice or *trump* of the *Arch-angel*, but they are dragg'd into the open light by the Spirits of Darkneſs before the *Tribunal* of the Almighty *Judge*; whoſe countenances will carry dejection, as their conſciences will ſuggeſt to them the ſad remembrance of the innumerable provocations they have given him. The preſence of that glorious Godhead whoſe authority they have ſo inſolently affronted, whoſe name they have ſo impiouſly blaſphem'd, and whoſe mercies they have ſo obſtinately rejected, fills them with the dire expectations of a fearful and irrevocable doom. The all-ſeeing Eye, who hath trac'd them through all their ſecret myſteries and dark intrigues of iniquity, will then produce his *regiſter*, and expoſe what he has there recorded to the view of *Men* and *Angels*. There the *guilty wretches* ſee themſelves proſcrib'd, and all their abominable actions exactly copy'd from their firſt originals; there they will find all their ſecret *machinations*, their dark *cheats*, their lewd *imaginations*, and hypocritical *intentions* recorded in the moſt legible characters; and perceiving themſelves thus ſhamefully detected, they will be forced to confeſs their *charge*, and proclaim themſelves *guilty* before all that vaſt aſſembly of *Spirits*, to their everlaſting infamy and reproach. Their trial being over, the righteous *Judge*, who is *too* great to be over-aw'd, and *too* juſt to be brib'd, will with a terrible

The judgment *of the wicked.*

Their appearance.

Their trial.

Their ſentence.

voice denounce that direful doom, "*Go ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*": Every word whereof breathes woe and miſery! Then in the bitter agonies of their ſouls they will cry to *Heaven* for mercy, but it will be *too* late! Their *Judge* will be *too* much provok'd to be intreated, whoſe ears will be then for ever ſtopp'd, and whoſe Bowels will be impenetrably harden'd againſt all farther overtures of mercy. So that the damn'd *Spirits* will immediately perceive the dreadful effects; they will ſee the *Clouds* from above, and the *Earth* from beneath caſting forth torrents of fire upon them, which in an inſtant will ſet all the World in a blaze about their ears: They will be encompaſs'd with *flames* and *ſmoke*, without any poſſibility to eſcape; for whither can they fly from this avenging preſence of God? When the *Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat; the Earth alſo, and all that is therein ſhall be burnt up.* (2 Pet. iii. 10.) This is call'd the *ſecond death*, [p] in compariſon of which, that of the *body* is but the ſhadow of Death. Nothing of life remains but the ſenſe of miſery, and that will be as ſtrong for ever as at the firſt entrance. Moreover, they will be rais'd with an exquiſite ſenſe of Pain, that ſo they may always feel the pangs of death, without ever dying. Thus [q] wicked Men ſhall be cloath'd with eternal Bodies, that in them they may ſuffer the eternal puniſhment of their ſins; and ſo they ſhall have Strength to ſuffer as long as vengeance has Will to *inflict*. Eternity is the diſmal adjunct,

Their execution.

[p] Mortui Vitæ, & Morti ſine fine victuri. *Aug.*

[q] Οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ αἰώνια λαμβάνουσι σώματα, ἵνα εἰς αἰῶνας τὰ ἁμαρτήματα ὑπομείνωσι τὸν βάσανον. *Cyril.*

which

which infuſes a new acrimony into their torments: And this the higheſt ſtrain, the vertical point of miſery, as leaving not ſo much as a glimpſe of hope; which uſes to be the reſerve and laſt reſort of the miſerable.

Epiſtle. Rom. 13. ℣. 8. to the end.

MEDITATIONS FOR ADVENT-SUNDAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 21. from ℣. 1. to 14.

THIS being a time wherein the *Church* gives us particular notice of that great and terrible day, wherein all mankind muſt *appear before the Judgment-ſeat of* Chriſt, to give a ſtrict account of all their thoughts, words, and works; let us endeavour by all means poſſible to poſſeſs our minds with an awful apprehenſion of ſo great and important an event: For the bare ſpeculation of a future *Judgment* will prove very inſignificant, unleſs we draw forth all its conſequential power and energy. Let the *truths* we believe be never ſo weighty and momentous, never ſo apt to inſpirit and invigorate us, yet unleſs we ſeriouſly conſider and apply them as ſuch to our wills and affections, and take the pains to extract out of them their native powers and properties, and to infuſe them into our lives, they will lie like ſo many dead notions in our minds, and never impart to us the leaſt degree of ſpiritual activity. But if we tincture our ſouls with a *ſtrong* and *affecting* ſenſe of the laſt dreadful day, it will make us hate our *ſins*, and hate our *ſelves* for them; it will make us devout and importunate in our *Prayers*, very ſincere and paſſionate in our *Repentance*, and will engage

The influence which a future Judgment *ought to have on our lives.*

engage us in a heavenly *Life* and *Converſation*. Would men but frequently repreſent to their minds all the ſcenes and circumſtances of terror that will attend our *Lord's* coming, it would quickly *reform* the world, give a new *reſurrection* to piety and virtue, and *ſecure* men from the dangers of a future ſtate.

The Terror *of the laſt* Day.

Nor is this a wild ſuppoſition: For when the *Sun* ſhall be turned into *Darkneſs*, and the *Moon* into *Blood*; when the *Heavens ſhall paſs away*, and the *Elements melt with fervent heat*; when we ſhall ſee the *amazing* ſplendour of the *Judge* above us, and the *dreadful* mouth of the bottomleſs pit beneath us; when the *graves* ſhall open and give up their dead, and *men* being ſurrounded with ghaſtly horrors, ſhall run up and down diſtracted and at their wits end; who can imagine the confuſion and terror, the ſhrieks and cries which ſhall every where be ſeen and heard then, and not ſhrink with the very apprehenſion? At that *day* it will be no wonder if *mens hearts ſhall fail them for fear*, and their *wits* be loſt with guilt, and their fond *hopes* deſtroyed by prodigy and amazement; but it will be an extreme wonder, if the conſideration and certain expectation of theſe things ſhall not awake our ſleeping Spirits, and raiſe us from the *death of ſin*, and the baſeneſs of vice and diſhonourable actions, to *live ſoberly* and *temperately*, *charitably* and *juſtly*, *piouſly* and *obediently in this preſent world*. Good God! what a day ſhall that be when all the ſons of *Adam* ſhall meet! What an amazing ſight will it be, to ſee all mankind ſtart out of their *graves*, and appear before their *Judge!* The *rich* and the *great* men, *princes* and *potentates*, men of *honour* and *fortune*, who are in this world exalted above the ordinary level of mankind; all the men of *name* and

and *renown*, whoſe fame is recorded in *ſtory*; who have ſignaliz'd themſelves in their ſeveral ages by their *piety* and *virtue*, *wiſdom* and *valour*, or it may be by their *vices*: Theſe, and the whole race of men, of all ſucceſſive generations, from *Adam* to the end of the world, muſt then appear. In this great multitude we ſhall meet all thoſe who by their illuſtrious examples and holy precepts taught us to walk in the paths of juſtice. There we ſhall ſee all thoſe good men whom God ſent to recover and recal us from human follies and perverſeneſs: And when we eſpy the *good man*, who reprov'd us for our backſlidings, we ſhall call to mind how we mock'd at counſel, how we laugh'd, return'd to our vomit, and ſtrengthen'd ourſelves in our wickedneſs. Then likewiſe men ſhall meet the *partners* of their ſins, and them that drank the round when they crown'd their *heads* with folly and forgetfulneſs, and their *cups* with noiſe. Then ſhall we ſee that poor trembling *wretch* whom we tempted to *adultery* or *uncleanneſs*, to *drunkenneſs* or *perjury*, by witty diſcourſes and deep diſſembling. Among the reſt, the *Atheiſt*, who has diſputed very ſubtilly and philoſophically againſt a God and religion, and broke many a witty *jeſt* upon *Heaven* and *Hell*, will be in no ſmall conſternation, when he ſhall find all his *philoſophy* confuted, and his *jeſts* quite ſpoil'd by eternal anguiſh: For in ſhort, the *brave* and the *bold* ſinner, who mock'd at the fear of God, as a baſe and effeminate paſſion, even thoſe mighty *Hectors*, who carry'd fear and terror in their looks, ſhall then ſtand trembling before that God whoſe being and authority they have ſo peremptorily denied and affronted; and from thence be tranſmitted into a diſmal eternity, there to languiſh out an everlaſting exiſtence, in a ſtate

The woful Change the wicked will undergo.

a ſtate of endleſs, eaſeleſs, and remedileſs calamity. This will certainly be the ſtate of ſinners at the day of *Judgment*; and what a diſmal proſpect muſt that perſon have, who when he dies muſt not ſleep in the duſt under an eternal inſenſibility, but muſt endure more than 'tis poſſible for him either to feel or conceive here! *For even thereafter as a man ſeareth, ſo is God's diſpleaſure.*

The inconceivable felicity of the righteous.

But on the other hand, what a joyful day will that be to thoſe bleſſed *Souls*, who after having *fought the good fight*, and *finiſhed their courſe* in the fear of God, ſhall be tranſlated from miſery and labour to life and immorality? When they ſhall lift up their heads in hope, becauſe *the time of their redemption draweth nigh:* When the priſon-doors ſhall be open'd, and the *Soul* ſhall march out in triumph, conducted by the *Angels* to receive that joyful ſentence, *Come ye bleſſed of my Father*, &c. "*Come*, all *you* who "have imitated me in holineſs, and followed me "in my ſuffering! *You* who have not been diſ-"courag'd at the meanneſs of my *firſt* appear-"ance, nor the long expectation of my *ſecond* "coming: Whoſe *love* and *reſolution* for me "was not *baffled* by the contempt of the world, "*debauch'd* by the examples of men, nor *abated* "by the pretended difficulty of my Inſtituti-"ons; *Inherit a* glorious *kingdom prepar'd for* "*you from the beginning of the world!* And "there live in *love*, in *joy*, in *peace* to all eter-"nity.

The

The PRAYER.

O *Incomprehenſible Lord God! who art pleaſed out of thine infinite mercy this* day *to admoniſh all the world of thy* Son's *approaches, grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that my heart may be no longer enſlav'd to the vanities of life, but continue ſtedfaſt in thy holy love: Let not any interpoſition of the earth eclipſe the* Sun of Righteouſneſs, *and obſtruct the influence of his refreſhing Beams, but let his light direct, and his cheriſhing heat warm my frozen heart, that I may with conſtancy and perſevering patience, wait till his* ſecond coming, *and then receive the joyful* Sentence *of the righteous, in order to be made partaker of thy heavenly Kingdom, thro' the merits and interceſſion of* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed* Saviour *and* Redeemer, *to whom with* Thee *and the* Holy Ghoſt, *be all honour and glory, world without end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty God! give us grace that we may caſt away the works of darkneſs, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life (in which thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt* came to viſit us in great humility;) that in the laſt day, when he ſhall come again in his glorious Majeſty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may riſe to the life immortal, thro' him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the *Holy Ghoſt*, now and ever. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm *Proper.* 19. 45. 85. *Evening.* 89. 110. 132.

The FEAST *of* CHRIST, *His* NATIVITY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Iſa.* 9. 2 *Luke* 2. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. *Iſa.* 7. 2 *Tit.* 3.

FOR about four thouſand years after the *creation of the world*, man lay groaning under the power and tyranny of Satan, to whom he had ſold and enſlav'd himſelf by ſin. His condition in this world was ſo wretched and unworthy the original excellency of his nature, that it deſerv'd not the name of life. He was diſinherited and baniſh'd out of *Paradiſe*, an heir of the regions of darkneſs, whoſe miſery was inconceivably great! But the meaſure of God's love being proportionable to the dreadful evils from which we are redeem'd, he in his counſel decreed the recovery of *man* from his wretched ſtate, in order to re-poſſeſs him of that happineſs he had loſt, and to make him again the favourite of *heaven*. Which came to paſs after this manner.

Chriſt *conceiv'd by the* Holy Ghoſt.

In the fulneſs of that time, which was long before prefixed in the eternal counſel of *God*, the *Holy Ghoſt* by an immediate, inviſible, and miraculous operation on the pure and immaculate Womb of a Virgin call'd *Mary*, of the lineage of *David*, enabled her without any congreſs of man, to conceive the holy *Jeſus*, the Saviour of the world. When the time of her deliv ery was near, the divine providence brought the bleſſed Virgin out of *Nazareth* to *Bethlehem*, the city of *David*, to be taxed with her husband *Joſeph*, according to a decree iſſued from

S.t Luke Chap. II.

Christ's Nativity.

S.t Luke 2. Verse 7.

She brought forth her first born Son, *and wrapped him in swadling clothes, & laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the Inn.*

from *Auguſtus Cæſar*. The holy maid (who conſider'd not the troubleſomeneſs of ſo long a Journey, and the incommodiouſneſs of the time, and her condition,) obey'd the order of the *Emperor*, and arriv'd at *Bethlehem* in the throng of ſtrangers, who had ſo fill'd up the places of hoſpitality and publick entertainment, that *there was no room for* Joſeph *and* Mary *in the inn*. But yet ſhe found that it was neceſſary to retire, where ſhe might ſoftly lay her burden, which began to call at the gates of its priſon; and ſhe that was mother to the King of all the creatures, could find no better place than a *ſtable*, whither ſhe retir'd; and where ſhe *brought forth her firſt-born into the world*.

Born of the Virgin Mary.

As there was no ſin in the conception, ſo neither had ſhe probably the uſual pains in the production. And he that came from his grave faſt tied *with a ſtone and ſignature*; and into the *college of Apoſtles*, the *doors being ſhut*; and into the *glories of his Father* through the *Firmament*; came alſo (as the *Church* from the days of *Gregory Nazianzen* until now, hath piouſly believ'd) into the world, without doing the leaſt violence to the pure and virginal body of his mother.

No pain in the production.

Altho' the whole *world* was highly concern'd in the birth of this great Prince, yet there was no miniſter to attend, ſave only *Angels*, who knew their duty to their *Lord*: For neither the poverty nor the piety of the *Virgin-mother* would permit her to provide other Nurſes; but her ſelf in every reſpect, perform'd the Offices of a tender and pious *parent*. For as ſoon as ſhe ſaw the *Saviour of the world* born, ſhe took him, and *wrapt him in ſwadling-clothes*; and after ſhe had a while cradled him in her arms, ſhe *laid him in a manger*; for ſuch was

Angels *miniſtred at the birth of* Jeſus.

the manifeſtation of his humility! But afterwards this *manger* grew to be ſo venerable, as became a place where that *Lamb of God* firſt lay, *which taketh away the ſins of the world:* For when *Adrian* the *Emperor* (who intended great deſpite to it) built a Temple to *Venus* and *Adonis* in that place, where the holy *Jeſus* was humbly laid, God (who in his infinite wiſdom does direct and manage things of diſparate and diſproportionate natures to his glory, making things improbable to co-operate to what wonder, or to what truth he pleaſes) cauſes this place to be reputed far above ſcandal and contempt; for it was conſecrated into a *Temple*, and the *Crib* into an *Altar*.

But to recal my ſelf from this digreſſion: Altho' the birth of the holy *Jeſus* was deſtitute of the uſual pomps which concurr'd to ſignifie and illuſtrate the birth of Princes; yet it was attended with great and glorious incidents and ſignifications from *heaven*: For, even in the very *ſame night*, wherein the holy *Virgin* brought him forth, there were certain poor *Shepherds*, who were *watching their flocks* not far diſtant; and the *Angel of the Lord came upon them, and the Glory of the Lord ſhone round about them.* We cannot imagine but the *ſhepherds* were at firſt in a great conſternation, when an *Angel* from heaven, ſurrounded with moſt refulgent rays of glory, deſcended upon them, and cloath'd their perſons in a bright and luminous robe, great enough to confound their *organs*, and amaze their faculties with too big a luſtre: But, the *Angel* ſoon remov'd their fears, by ſaying to them, *Fear not, for I bring unto you tydings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Chriſt the Lord.* The *Shep-*

herds

Firſt revealed to Shepherds.

herds needed no invitation to go ſee this ſtupendious ſight! but leſt their fancy ſhould riſe up to an expectation of a Prince as externally glorious as might be hop'd for upon the conſequence of ſo miraculous an apparition; the *Angel*, to prevent this miſtake, ſaid, *This ſhall be a ſign unto you, ye ſhall find the babe wrapp'd in ſwadling-cloaths, lying in a manger.* No ſooner had he told the meſſage, but a *light* aroſe, with ſuch an increaſe of ſplendor, that *midnight* was as clear as the *ſun*; and ſuddenly there was with the *Angel a multitude of the heavenly hoſt:* All breaking out into this triumphant doxology, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men.* Angelical Hymn *at* Chriſt's Birth.

As ſoon as theſe bleſſed *Choriſters* had ſung their heavenly anthem (and taught the *Church* a *hymn* to put into her offices for ever, on the anniverſary of this Feſtival) the *Angels return'd into heaven:* And the *Shepherds*, as ſoon as they had recover'd themſelves from the aſtoniſhment or trance wherein they lay, *went to Bethlehem to ſee this thing which the Lord had made known unto them. And they came with haſte, and found* Mary *and* Joſeph, *and the babe lying in a manger*, according to what the *Angel* had related to them. They were far from being ſurpriz'd at this outward meanneſs; for 'tis obſerv'd on the contrary, that they were fill'd with admiration: Inſomuch, that the tranſporting delight being too big to be confin'd in their own breaſts, they ſoon communicated that joy which was deſign'd for all the world. *For when they had ſeen it, they made known abroad the ſaying which was told them concerning this Child: And*, (as well they might) *all that heard it wonder'd.* Moreover, having ſeen what the *Angels* did upon the publication of the news, they ſoon learnt Shepherds *went to ſee the holy* Jeſus. *They publiſh it abroad.*

their duty to God, by *glorifying and praiſing him for all the things that they had heard and ſeen, as it was told unto them.*

Epiſtle. Heb. 1. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 13.

MEDITATIONS Upon the NATIVITY *of* CHRIST.

Goſpel. John 1. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 15.

WHAT a ſuperlative degree of praiſe and thankfulneſs is due to our great Creator, for *ſending his only begotten Son into the world*, in order to our ſalvation? When the divine goodneſs had imprinted his *laws* upon our nature in legible characters; and when mankind, by their wilful wickedneſs and inadvertency, had immers'd themſelves in the moſt groſs impieties and immoralities; notwithſtanding this, that he ſhould give up for our ſakes, not only the *greateſt*, but the *deareſt* perſon to him in the whole world, is ſuch a glorious expreſſion of his goodneſs, as for ever deſerves our moſt thankful acknowledgments, and can hardly be reflected on without extaſy and admiration! Herein the *Almighty* diſplay'd his divine *attributes* after a miraculous and incomprehenſible manner! Being a diſpenſation full of divine *wiſdom*, *power*, *juſtice*, *truth*, *mercy*, and *love*; and as ſuch ought to be admir'd and celebrated by *Angels*, and acknowledg'd and ador'd by *Men* with the profoundeſt gratitude. 'Tis certainly a ſubject worthy our admiration, that the holy *Jeſus*, who was the eternal and *only begotten Son of God*, far above all *principalities* and *powers*, higher than *Angels* or *Arch-angels*, ador'd by all the *celeſtial hoſt*, ſhould come down from the Boſom

Divine Attributes *diſplay'd in the works of our redemption.*

ſom of his *Father* to be made *Man* for our redemption! He who was the delight of *Heaven*, the joy of his *Father*; in whoſe preſence he had perfect felicity, and ſhould have enjoy'd it to all eternity, whatſoever had become of us, was contented to become a miſerable mortal man, to reſtore us to life and immortality. The exceeding greatneſs of his *love*, would not content it ſelf with committing the work of our ſalvation to any of the *Cherubim* or *Seraphim*; nor would he ſend the moſt glorious of the *Angels* upon this embaſſy of *peace* and *joy*, but he vouchſafed to come in *perſon*, and finiſh the work which the *Father* gave him to do: Which was a more tranſcendent expreſſion of his *love* to us, than if he had unpeopled *Heaven* for our ſakes, and deliver'd up to us the whole Choir of *Angels*, *Arch-angels*, and *Seraphims*.

Mercy peculiarly viſible in this great work.

And now, *what ſhall we render unto the Lord*, for this, and *all* other his innumerable *benefits*, *that he hath done unto us!* What *words* can expreſs! or what *thoughts* can comprehend a favour ſo unconceivable and ineffable! *This* is ſurely *a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation*, (fit to be embrac'd and entertain'd with all poſſible joy and thankfulneſs,) that *Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners.* That he who was in *the form of God, and thought it no robbery to be equal with God*, made himſelf of no *reputation*, took upon him the form of a *ſervant*, became a *man of ſorrows*, and acquainted himſelf with *griefs*; and all this to put himſelf into a better capacity of doing good to the world. This is news from *Heaven*, and the moſt *wonderful* and *beſt* that ever came thence! Firſt publiſh'd by *Angels* (as moſt worthy the mouth and errand of ſuch glorious creatures) at which all *Heaven* was pleas'd and raviſh'd with

joy, breaking forth inſtantly into *hymns* of praiſe and congratulation; and it was ſent peculiarly to *man on Earth*, to expreſs *good-will towards him*, and a *love* that paſſeth knowledge!

Exceeds our comprehenſion.

Such a wondrous prodigy of *love*, which not only *puzzles* my conceit, but *out-reaches* my wonder and admiration! And tho' it be a *love* that exceeds my *largeſt* thoughts, ſuch as I have *infinite* cauſe to rejoice in, yet while I am *contemplating* it, methinks I am like one that is looking down from a ſtupendious *precipice*, whoſe height fills me with a ſacred horror, and even overſets my reaſon, this being the *wonder* of all *wonders!* Here therefore may I cry out, *Ὦ Βάθος, Oh the height, and depth, and breadth of the power and goodneſs of God!*

Humility of Jeſus.

But altho' the goodneſs and mercy of our bleſſed Lord are ſo tranſcendent that they cannot *enter into the heart of man to conceive*; yet he aſſum'd to himſelf vile and frail humanity, on purpoſe that he might *dwell* among us, and throughly *inſtruct* us in our duty, and *ſhew* us the way to eternal life, by his heavenly doctrine and holy example. When he deſcended to *earth* he choſe to be born in the ſuburbs and retirement of a ſmall *town*, diſdaining not to be laid in a *manger*, to teach us to deſpiſe the *glory* of the *world*, by his averſion to the pomp of it in his own perſon. This is what he choſe, as moſt *agreeable* to the work he had undertaken, and moſt *proper* for the giving a true idea of the things of this world, to ſuch as deſire to be his followers. For ſince the eternal wiſdom of God, who knew how to *chooſe* the *good*, and *refuſe* the *evil*, choſe a life of *poverty*, it gives us ſufficient demonſtration, that *riches* and *honours* (thoſe idols of mankind) are ſo far from creating true felicity, that they

Poverty better than Riches, and why.

are

are ſcarce of themſelves eligible in the number of good things: However, no man is to be aſham'd of innocent poverty, of which the holy *Jeſus*, (the Son of the living God, and the *Saviour* of the *World*) made choice, and of which his *Apoſtles* after him made publick profeſſion.

Simplicity of Spirit a Chriſtian duty.

Our *Saviour* having bleſſed the *World* by his birth, ſhew'd by his choice of the *firſt perſons* to whom he made it known, that he would *hide* his myſteries from the *great* and *wiſe*, and *reveal* them to the *ſimple*. For, the *Angels* brought the meſſage to *Shepherds*, to perſons *poor* and *mean*, and *humble*; but likely to be more apprehenſive of the *myſtery*, and leſs mindful of the *poverty* of the *Meſſias*. If the *Angel* had told the ſtory to *Herod*, or to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, their ambition had ends contradictory to the ſimplicity and meanneſs of the Birth of *Jeſus*; but the *Shepherds* received the news with *joy* and *exultation*, with *tranſports* and *raviſhments* at the condeſcenſion of that God who ſtoop'd to the condition of *man:* Which ſhews that love to *Jeſus* may be ſuitably promoted by the *plainer* underſtandings of honeſt and illiterate people, as by the *finer* and more *exalted* ſpeculations of great clerks that have leſs devotion. Moreover, this conſideration teaches us, that they whoſe affections are fixed in ſecular pomp, are of all perſons the moſt indiſpos'd, and fartheſt remov'd from the underſtanding of ſpiritual excellencies; eſpecially when they do not come cloath'd with the advantages of the world, and of ſuch beauties as they admire. God himſelf comes into the world, deſtitute of all earthly advantages, but incircled with irradiations of humility and good-will: But this is folly to the great men of the world; a *mean birth* is an ignoble ſtain, *poverty* is a ſcandal,

and

and the *croſs* an unanſwerable objection. But the *Angel*'s moral in the circumſtance of his addreſs, and inviting the poor *Shepherds* to *Bethlehem*, is, that none are fit to come to *Chriſt*, (and conſequently to participate of the Kingdom of *Heaven*,) but thoſe who are *poor in Spirit*, *deſpiſers* of the world, *ſincere* in their intentions, without *craft* and *ſecular* deſigns.

Diligence in our calling accepted by God.

But the employment of theſe perſons here, is worthy our conſideration: They were *watching over their flocks by night*. They were innocently buſied in the work of an honeſt calling, and at the ſame time they had the converſation of *Angels*: Which teaches us that he that is diligent and induſtrious in that ſtate of life wherein divine providence hath plac'd him, is then doing ſervice to God, and a work ſo pleaſing to him who hath appointed the ſons of men to labour, that to theſe *Shepherds* he made a return and recompence by the converſation of *Angels*; and hath advanc'd the reputation of an honeſt and a mean employment to ſuch a teſtimony of acceptance, that no honeſt perſon (tho' buſied in *meaner* offices,) ought ever hereafter, in the eſtimation of *Chriſt*'s diſciples, to become contemptible.

Theory without practice unprofitable.

From hence let us take patterns of Imitation; let us reduce our *knowledge* into *practice*: For, without this, how poor and unprofitable a thing is *ſpeculation?* What is a *man* the better for entring into the ſublime myſteries which the *Angels deſire to look into*, and being able to diſpute nicely about the adorable *Trinity*; if in the mean time he want that *meekneſs* and *humility*, which would render him amiable in the ſight of thoſe divine *Three*, who are the ſubject of his diſputation? For certain it is, that diſtinctions and notions (tho' never ſo ſubtil or

ſerviceable

ſerviceable to the truth) do not make a *man* juſt and holy; but a careful and conſcientious life recommends us to the favour and love of God. Want of *learning*, and diſability to conſider great ſecrets of *Theology*, does not retard our progreſs to ſpiritual perfections: And it is more deſirable to be affected with a true penitent *ſorrow* for ſin, than be able to reſolve the moſt difficult *caſes* about it. Suppoſe you had all the *Bible* treaſur'd up in your memory, and had a perfect comprehenſion of all the *moral philoſophy* in the world; to what purpoſe ſerves this mighty ſtock of rules, if not drawn out into uſe by *charity* and *humility*, and ſeconded by *divine grace?* Wherefore, let us now put in practice thoſe divine virtues, which will render us amiable in the ſight of the *Almighty*; let us be moſt thankful for the miraculous condeſcenſion of the incarnation of the *Son of God*, and rejoice at the *yearly commemoration* of ſo great a mercy; let our *joy* be expreſs'd by offering unto him our daily ſacrifice of gratitude and glory, for the incomprehenſible excellence of his *goodneſs*; and the bowels of that tender and unbounded *compaſſion* which hath intitled us to be partakers of the divine nature, if we forfeit it not.

The PRAYER.

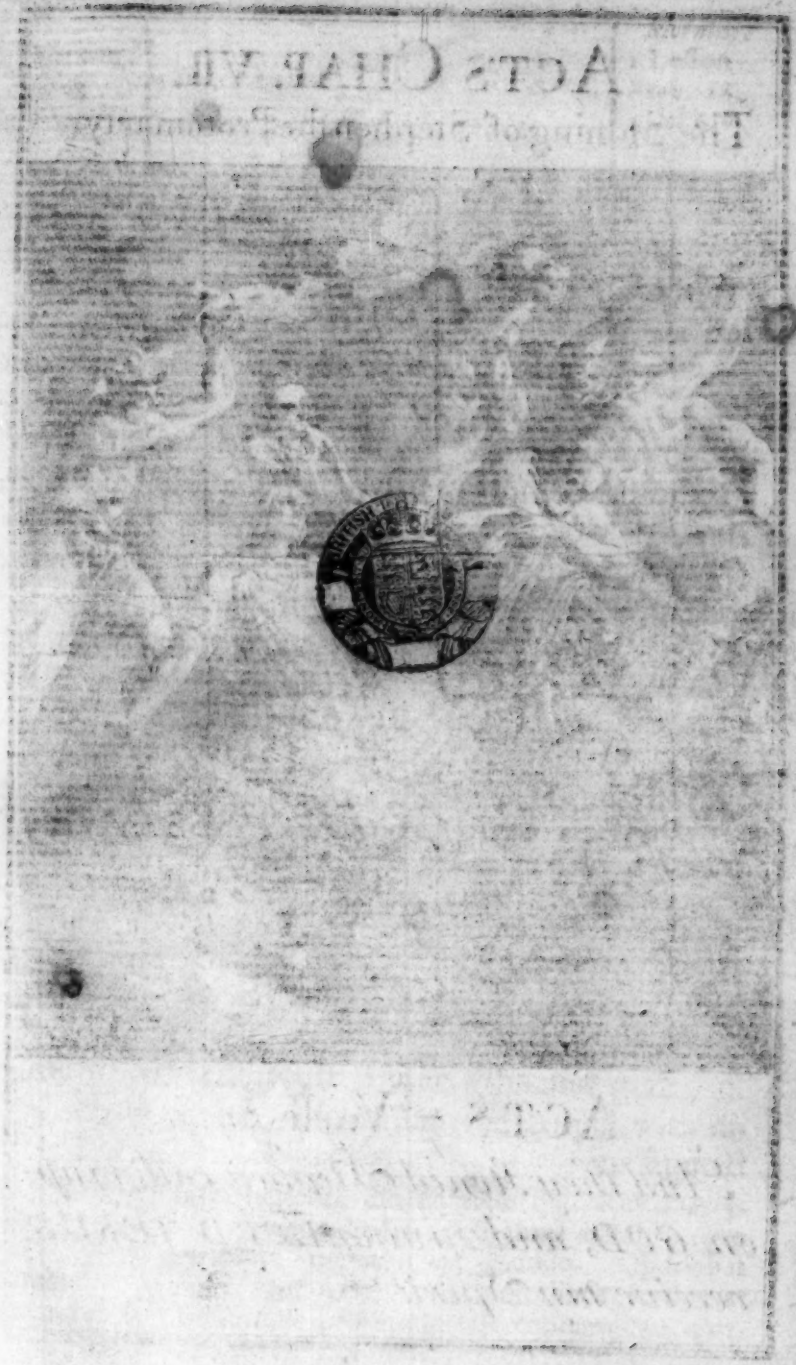
O *Bleſſed* Saviour, *thou God of infinite love and liberality! I adore and worſhip thee with the loweſt humility of* Soul *and* Body, *and give thee all poſſible praiſe and thanks for thy great and manifold mercies in the redemption of the world. O how ſhall I worthily celebrate this great ſolemnity! or, how ſhall I make any return for ſuch an amazing diſpenſation! What am I that*

that the King of Heaven ſhould thus delight to honour me? Nothing but miſery and ſin! Since therefore, O dear Redeemer, thou haſt been pleaſed to do ſuch great things for me, I beſeech thee, by all the paſt demonſtrations of thy love and condeſcenſion, to perfect the good work thou haſt begun. O fill my heart with ſuch a love of thee as never can be quench'd. Let me begin on this bleſſed day to throw off that troubleſome load of ſenſual and worldly affections which obſtruct my purer delights of divine love; that thou being the chief object of my thoughts, I may run chearfully the way of thy commandments, and at laſt be made partaker of a joyful reſurrection unto life eternal, thro' thy merits and interceſſion, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer, Jeſus. *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

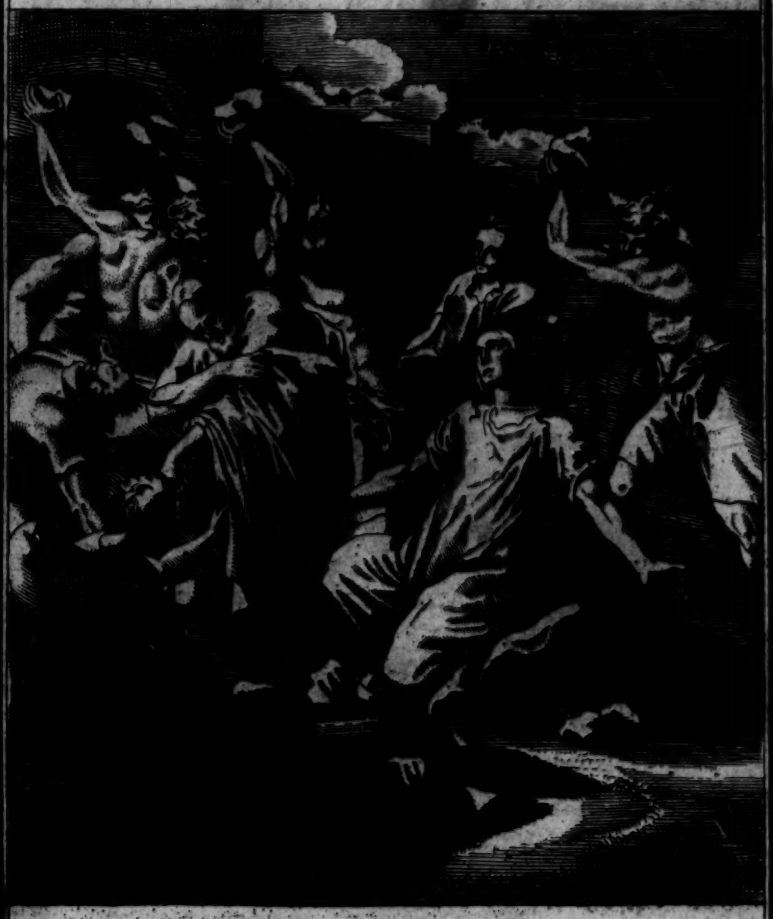
ALmighty God! who haſt given us thy only begotten Son, to take our Nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that I being regenerate and made thy child by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, thro' the ſame our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the ſame Spirit ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

St.



Acts Chap. VII.

The Stoning of Stephen the Protomartyr.



Acts 7 Verse 59.

And they Stoned Stephen, calling upon GOD, and saying, LORD JESUS, receive my Spirit.

Morning. Pſalm 119. *par.*

Evening. Pſalm 119. *par.*

St. STEPHEN'S DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſon *Prov.* 28. 2 *Act.* 6. ℣. 8. *&* *Cap.* 7. to ℣. 30. *Evening.* 1 Leſſon *Eccleſ.* 4. 2 *Acts* 7. ℣. 30. *to* 55.

THE martyrdom of St. *Stephen* immediately follows the great ſolemnity of *Chriſtmas*; the Church joining theſe two [r] feſtivals together, that we might obſerve the ſacred life of our great Maſter, and the exemplary death of this heroic Saint, at one view.

St. Stephen's *kindred unknown.*

The holy Scripture gives us no particular account either of the country, parents, or relations of this Proto-martyr of the Chriſtian faith. That he was a *Jew* there is no juſt cauſe to doubt, for he ſufficiently owns it in his apology to the people; but whether originally deſcended of the ſtock of *Abraham*, or of Parents brought in by the gate of proſelytiſm, we can but barely conjecture. But certain it is that he was a man of great zeal and piety, being repleniſh'd with the moſt divine gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, preaching the goſpel with an undaunted

[r] Celebravimus heſternâ die natalem quo Rex martyrum natus eſt in mundo; hodie celebramus natalem quo primicerius martyrum migravit ex mundo. Oportebat enim ut primùm immortalis pro mortalibus ſuſciperet carnem, & ſic mortalis pro immortali contemneret mortem. Et ideo natus eſt Dominus ut moreretur pro ſervo, ne ſervus timeret mori pro Domino. Natus eſt *Chriſtus* in terris, ut *Stephanus* naſceretur in Cœlis, *&c.* *Aug. Ser.* 1. *de Stephano.*

[s] Ho-

undaunted courage and resolution, which peculiarly fitted him for a place of honour in *Christ*'s Church, whereto he was advanc'd upon this occasion.

Charity of the primitive Church.

Now to make way for the history of his life and death, we must know first that the primitive Church was singularly remarkable for their great love and charity to their brethren. The rich dispos'd of their estates to minister to the exigencies of the poor, and deposited the money into one common treasury, the care whereof was committed to the *Apostles*, to see distribution made according to the rule of equality. But the number of believers daily encreasing at *Jerusalem*, the Apostles could not themselves minutely superintend the distribution of the common stock; and therefore were forc'd to take in others, as ordinary co-adjutors in that affair: For in this case (as it frequently happens among a multitude) a due proportion was not observ'd; so that there arose a complaint of those *Jews* that were call'd *Hellenists*, against the *Hebrew Jews*, because their widows were neglected, and receiv'd less than others in the daily distribution of the Church's money. The Apostles were very desirous that every one should have relief according to their just necessities, but at the same time they had not leisure to attend that, and all other parts and duties of their office. Therefore, they directed and enjoin'd the Church to nominate such persons as were fitted for it; men of known honesty and integrity, of approv'd and untainted reputations, furnish'd and endow'd with the extraordinary gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, who would discreetly discharge the trust committed to them. This determination pleas'd the people exceedingly; and accordingly they made choice of seven:

A difference between the Hebrews *and* Grecians.

Their

Their names were *Stephen*, *Philip*, *Prochorus*, *Nicanor*, *Timon*, *Parmenas*, and *Nicolas* a proſelyte of *Antioch*, all elected out of the ſeventy whom our Lord had choſen. Theſe were called Διάκονοι, or *Deacons*, who were to *ſerve tables*; that is, to wait upon the neceſſities of the poor, and to make daily proviſion for their publick *Agapæ* or love-feaſts, in which the holy Euchariſt was adminiſtred; ſo that their office was chiefly, at leaſt, eccleſiaſtical. Now the firſt and chief perſon in this election, was St. *Stephen*; whom the ancients frequently ſtile *Arch-Deacon*; as having the τὰ πρωτεῖα (as [f] *Chryſoſtom* ſpeaks) the primacy and precedence among the reſt, not as being only firſt in the catalogue, but particularly recommended under this character, *A man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt:* He was exquiſitely skill'd (ſays a learned writer) in all parts of the chriſtian doctrine, and filled with great eloquence and elocution to declare and publiſh it; enriched with many miraculous gifts and powers, and a Spirit of courage and reſolution to encounter the moſt potent oppoſition. He preach'd and pleaded the cauſe of Chriſtianity with a firm and undaunted mind, and that nothing might be wanting to render it effectual, he confirm'd his doctrine by many publick and unqueſtionable miracles, plain evidences and demonſtrations of the truth and divinity of that Religion which he taught. This ſoon awaken'd the malice of the unbelieving *Jews*; who ſelected the moſt learned men out of five of their chief Synagogues or Colleges to diſpute with him; *viz.* The *Libertines*, the *Cyrenians*, the *Alexandrians*, the *Cilicians*, and *Aſians:* an unequal

The original of Deacons.

St. Stephen's *eminent accompliſhments.*

The envy and oppoſition of the Jews *againſt him.*

[f] Homil. 15. in Act.

match! ἀνδρῶν ἀσεβεσάτων πεντάπολις (as [t] *Chryſoſtom* calls it) a whole army of wicked adverſaries, all at once, roſe up to diſpute with *Stephen*. The ſubject of their diſputation was concerning the perpetual nature of the *Moſaic* inſtitutions, and the deſtruction of the Temple; but he all the time deliver'd himſelf with that life and zeal; that evidence and ſtrength of reaſon; that freedom and majeſty of elocution; that his *antagoniſts* were not *able to reſiſt the wiſdom and the Spirit by which he ſpoke*. So that finding this method ineffectual (they being too weak for him in point of reaſoning) they accompliſh'd their deſigns by falſe accuſations and malice; ſetting up men of debauch'd conſciences, who ſwore, *That* Stephen *had ſpoken blaſphemy againſt the law and the temple*. Whereupon he was ſeiz'd, and brought before the grand *Sanhedrim*, at which time the judges diſcover'd the appearances of an extraordinary ſplendor and brightneſs upon his face, the innocency of his cauſe, and the clearneſs of his conſcience, manifeſting themſelves in the luſtre and chearfulneſs of his countenance: *They ſaw his face as it had been the face of an Angel*. There he defended himſelf with words full of prudence and piety: He zealouſly and ſtrenuouſly confuted the *Jews* in their erroneous tenets concerning the true *Meſſiah*; maintaining that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was the true one foretold by the Prophets. But when they heard theſe things, *they were cut to the heart, and they gnaſhed on him with their teeth*. But he, regardleſs of what was done below, had his eyes and thoughts fix'd upon a higher and a nobler object; and was bleſſed with a proſpect of the glories of

St. Stephen *confutes the moſt learned* Jews,

who accuſe him of Blaſphemy.

His happy proſpect of Heaven.

[t] Orat. in S. *Stephan.* Tom. 5.

Heaven

Heaven, and a ſenſible appearance of the divine Majeſty, and the holy *Jeſus* cloath'd in the robes of our glorify'd nature, ſtanding at the right-hand of his Father. The bleſſed *ſaint* being infinitely raviſh'd with the viſion, publickly declar'd, *That he ſaw the heavens open'd, and the Son of Man ſtanding at the right-hand of God*; as if it were to protect and crown his ſuffering ſervant. Then they were tranſported with fury, taxing him with blaſphemy, and running upon him with united malice; and they hurried him out of the city, in order to ſtone him to death, as the ancient law was againſt Blaſphemers. The witneſſes according to cuſtom ſtripped themſelves, and laid their garments at *Saul*'s feet, who in a particular manner was conſenting to his martyrdom; and then began the tragedy, which was inhumanly ſeconded by the multitude, who fell upon him with a ſhower of ſtones. At which ſeaſon the bleſſed Martyr was upon his knees, devoutly recommending his ſoul to God, and loudly interceding for his blood-thirſty enemies, that the Almighty would convert their hearts, and not *lay the ſin to their charge.* Having thus ſent up his prayers to heaven, he gave up the Ghoſt; or as the ſacred *hiſtorian* expreſſes it, *fell aſleep:* So ſoft a pillow is death to a good man; ſo quietly does he leave the world, as a weary labourer goes to his reſt at night.

He is hurried out of the city,

and ſtoned.

Epiſtle. Acts 7. ℣. 55. to the end.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. STEPHEN'S DAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 23. ℣. 34. to the end.

MAN hath but one entrance into the world, but a thouſand ways to paſs from thence: And as it is in the natural, ſo it is in the ſpiritual life; for nothing but the union of faith and obedience, can bring us into the light of heaven, but there are a thouſand paſſages of turning into darkneſs. Now that we may refreſh the ſadneſs of this conſideration, let us imitate the example of St. *Stephen*, the *Protomartyr* of the Chriſtian faith, who caus'd light to break forth from the deepeſt incloſures of darkneſs, and grace to triumph upon the ruins of ſin. When his bloody perſecutors clos'd him in on every ſide, his faith and charity were moſt admirable! As to the firſt, 'twas not a ſlight tranſient glance, a drowſy, imperfect aſſent, a ſtaggering, wavering opinion; but 'twas a lively repreſentation, and affecting viſion, a full perſuaſion of thoſe glorious truths which *God hath prepared for thoſe that love him.* He look'd forward with the eyes of Angels, and judg'd by the light of the bleſſed Spirit. He beheld (amidſt all the barbarities that men could inflict) the *heavens open'd*, and his Prince and Saviour ſitting at the right-hand of power; with one hand diſpenſing his graces, with the other holding never-fading wreaths to crown the patience of his *ſaints*. There he likewiſe ſaw the illuſtrious orders of Angels, with crowns of glory and bleſſedneſs on their heads, beckoning to him from the farther ſhore, to make haſte thi-

St. Stephen's *faith.*

His glorious proſpect.

the

ther, and come into the joyous participation of their ſociety and happineſs. And this exalted him above nature, and tranſported him above the world, and all its motives! His ſoul leap'd for joy to ſee a way open'd into the Holy of Holies; eſpecially when he conſider'd the mighty intereſt he had there; that delightful proſpect was abundantly ſufficient to ſupport his ſpirits under the moſt direful accidents. Whereupon he gave a bold defiance to all the combining malice of his perſecutors, and did in a manner tell them, that he ſhould be happy, eternally happy, in deſpite of the worſt they could do to him; ſeeing the matter wholly depended upon his own courage and reſolution, back'd and aſſiſted by the never-failing grace of God. He knew there was nothing that his enemies could deprive him of, but what he could very well live without: So that he was not liable to be fruſtrated of his happineſs by the knaveries and cruelties of men; for this bleſſed aſſurance furniſhed him with ſuch a mighty ſtock of joyful conſiderations, as caus'd the moſt melancholy apprehenſions to fly away, like the morning-miſts before the riſing ſun.

The influence it had upon him.

Thus bravely did that great hero of Chriſtianity, St. *Stephen*, *ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake*, which requir'd a moſt ſublime and exalted degree of all virtues! It is the greateſt teſtimony of the greateſt love to die for God; and conſequently the moſt noble demonſtration of the univerſality of our obedience. Juſtly therefore may we acknowledge nothing more auguſt in religion than *martyrdom*, as being a concurrence of the greateſt virtues. There faith and love is in perfection; for it muſt certainly be an excellent degree of faith, which that man has in God, who can reſign up all that is good and

Of Martyrdom.

It is a repoſitory of the greateſt virtues.

pleaſant in this world, and ſubmit himſelf to all that is evil, or terrible; that can meet death with all its terrors, and truſt God for his reward in another life. What a generous, victorious faith is this! and what a ſtupendious love muſt ſuch a perſon have for the Almighty? It muſt be a degree of love truly *ſeraphick*, and which comes the neareſt of any to the love of Angels and beatify'd ſpirits, that can reconcile him to ſuch an undertaking. For if a man chearfully, and in cold blood, ſurrenders himſelf to the ſtake or to the ſcaffold, (as one obſerves) when in every period of his advance, 'tis ſtill in his power by compliance to recede from his dreadful undertaking, and there calmly and deliberately ſubmits himſelf to certain execution, and feels himſelf die with all his thoughts, reflexions, and paſſions about him; this is certainly ſuch a noble ſpectacle of faith and love as might well deſerve to be a theatre to Angels and Men, yea, even to God himſelf.

and the mark of true faith and love.

But to proceed in our particular remarks upon St. *Stephen*'s death, let us conſider how piouſly and zealouſly he recommended his departing ſoul to the bleſſed *Jeſus*. He ſent up his prayers faſter to heaven, than his perſecutors could rain down ſtones upon him; and all the while with patience and reſignation ſubmitting his injuries to the deciſion of him who is the judge of all men. The perverſe gallantry of this age may account it an argument of a poor ſpirit to fly to prayer, as a means of defence from our enemies; ſince oaths and menaces, fury and revenge, are the irreligious teſtimonies of mens courage: But if we did truly eſtimate our own weakneſs or his ſtrength, we ſhall ſurely reckon it our beſt policy to fly to the protection of the holy *Jeſus*. He obſerves our fears

Reſignation to God.

Its Efficacy,

and ſorrows, and the cruelties and injuſtice of our enemies, and ſo can diſcover the beſt means, and the fitteſt time of our deliverance: And if they ſhould be licens'd to take away our temporal life, a *Chriſtian* might more truly than *Socrates*, ſay, [u] *My enemies may kill me, but they cannot hurt me.* Their malice would but ſend us a little ſooner to an eternity of joy; where we ſhall unload our ſelves at once of all our preſent ſighs and griefs, and in their room take up eternal ſongs of praiſe and hallelujahs: Where every moment's enjoyment will be ſufficient to recompenſe us a thouſand fold, for all the hardſhips under which we now ſuffer and complain. *and excellency.*

But the next thing that offers it ſelf to our conſideration, is the ſublime charity of the bleſſed *Martyr*; which was extenſive enough to cover the higheſt affronts, and the greateſt wrongs and injuries that could be put upon him; and accordingly, after the example of his great Maſter, he pray'd for the pardon of his murderers, even while they were [w] ſtoning him with the moſt implacable malice: And all that exceſs of ſeverity with which they treated him, *Forgiving injuries a Chriſtian duty.*

[u] Ἐμὲ γὰρ Ἄνυτος καὶ Μέλητος οὐκ ἀποκτεῖναι μὲν δύναιντ' ἄν, βλάψαι δὲ οὔ. *Plato in Apolog.*

[w] *St.* Auguſtin *brings in St.* Stephen *ſpeaking thus unto God.* Ego Patior, ego Lapidor, in me ſæviunt, & in me fremunt; ſed ne ſtatuas illis hoc peccatum, quia ut dicam tibi à te primo audivi. Ego ſervus tuus patior, ſed multum intereſt inter me & te; tu Dominus, ego ſervus; tu Verbum, ego auditor verbi: tu Magiſter, ego diſcipulus; tu Creator, ego creatus; tu Deus, ego homo; multum intereſt inter peccatum iſtorum qui lapidant me, & illorum qui crucifixerunt te: quando ergo dixiſti, Pater ignoſce illis, quia neſciunt quid faciunt, pro magno peccato petiſti, & me pro minimo petere docuiſti: Domine ne ſtatuas illis hoc peccatum; ego patior in carne, iſti non pereant in mente. *Aug. Ser.* 1. *de S. Stephano.*

was but like a ſhower of hail upon the tiles of a muſick-houſe, which with all its clatter and noiſe diſturbs not the harmony that is within. He was not mov'd into paſſion, or a deſire of revenge, notwithſtanding all the fierce treatment of his bloody perſecutors. This all-conquering faith and patience, in defiance of worldly maxims, is ſtill the wiſeſt procedure; for while we are in this world, we muſt expect to be encompaſs'd with crowds of evil accidents; and if we are apt to be affected with the injury, and entertain a deſire of revenge, we ſhall be continually pain'd and diſquieted, we ſhall be the ſport of every wind and wave, and be happy or miſerable as the little occurrences of life fall out. But if we would follow the dictates of reaſon, and ſoften our anger into patience and charity, we ſhall be above the reach of injuries, and our peaceful minds will be raiſed above theſe clouds into a calm and quiet *Æther*, and with a becoming reſignation we ſhall hear the rolling thunders grumble and burſt under our feet: All outward accidents will fall on our minds (as they did on St. *Stephen*) like ſtones on a bed of down, where, in ſome meaſure, the impreſſion is ſlight, becauſe the reſiſtance it meets with is little. And this will be a much greater and more ingenuous pleaſure, than the higheſt revenge can give us: This is a pleaſure ſo pure and refin'd, ſo noble and heroick, that none but rational natures are capable of it; whereas that of ſpight and revenge (if it can be called a pleaſure) is a mere brutal one: Even the moſt contemptible creatures can vent their anger when moleſted, and endeavour to return the miſchief.

The great wiſdom thereof,

and happy conſequence.

But let us follow the example of this bleſſed *ſaint*, in having an univerſal love and charity for

Recommended to the practice.

for all mankind. This is the abridgement of Chriſtian perfection, the fulfilling of the divine law; for all the particular precepts are in ſubſtance, love. This principally reſpects Chriſtians, who are children of the ſame heavenly Father, and joint heirs of the ſame glorious inheritance; and without it all other virtues have but a falſe luſtre. Let us therefore quench the flames of anger, and in its room kindle the fire of love towards our greateſt enemies. And tho' they are plotting to make us as miſerable as they can, this is ſtill a bleſſed opportunity of making our charity more illuſtrious. We may then cry out, *Father! forgive them*; we may recommend them, as we do departing friends, in prayers and tears to God; and whatever the ſucceſs prove to them, it will be an inconceivable happineſs to us: All that they can do will vaniſh as ſoon as we awake in eternity; and there we ſhall receive an hundred fold for all our love and charity to our Enemies; and our moſt acute trials will in a moment be loſt, and ſwallow'd up in one continued everlaſting joy.

The PRAYER.

O *Moſt great and glorious Lord God! the free beſtower of all bleſſings, who in thy firſt Martyr St.* Stephen, *haſt vouchſafed thy Church an eminent example of Chriſtianity; give me grace, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, to tranſcribe in my heart that faith and charity, that patience and reſignation, and all other graces that were conſpicuous in him. Give me an heroic ſpirit, and an undaunted reſolution, that I may contemn the world and all things in it, whenever they come in competition with my duty to thee. Kindle in me a firm and ſtedfaſt faith in thy promiſes, an uni-*

verſal love towards all the world, and a meek and long-ſuffering Spirit; that I may never remember any injury to the prejudice of any man, but that I may love my neighbour as my ſelf, and thee more than my ſelf, and more than all the world; that ſo at laſt I may be received into the regions of peace and eternal charity, there to ſpend a long eternity in the fruition of the preſence and excellency of God the Father, Son, *and* Holy Ghoſt, *to whom be glory and praiſe, honour, adoration, and thankſgiving, now and for ever.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

GRant, O Lord! that in all our Sufferings here upon Earth, for the Teſtimony of thy Truth, we may ſtedfaſtly look up to Heaven, and by Faith behold the Glory that ſhall be revealed; and being filled with the Holy Ghoſt, may learn to love and bleſs our Perſecutors, by the example of thy firſt Martyr St. *Stephen*, who prayed for his Murderers to thee, O bleſſed *Jeſus!* who ſtandeſt at the right-hand of God, to ſuccour all thoſe that ſuffer for thee, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.*

St. JOHN's

Morning.
Pſal. *prop.*
120, 121,
122, 123,
124, 125
Evening.
126, 127,
128, 129,
130, 131.

St. JOHN'S DAY.

Morning,
1 Leſſon.
Eccl. 5.
2 *Rev.* 1.
Evening.
1 Leſſon.
Eccl. 6.
2 *Rev.*
22.

St. John *his* Kindred *and* Relations.

ST. *John* the Evangeliſt was a *Galilæan*, the ſon of *Zebedee* and *Salome*, and brother of St. *James* termed the *Major*. He was call'd very young, (and in the ſtate of celebacy) to the *Apoſtleſhip:* But he was equal in piety and wiſdom to thoſe who were much more ancient: Inſomuch that his Lord and Maſter had a particular affection for him, and lov'd him more than any of the *Apoſtles*; and for this reaſon he was term'd the *diſciple whom* Jeſus *lov*'d; that is, treated with more freedom and familiarity than the reſt. He was one of the three partakers in the moſt intimate paſſages of our *Saviour*'s life. He was preſent at the cure of *Peter*'s wives mother: The raiſing of *Jairus*'s daughter; and the *Transfiguration* in the mount. Moreover, he lay in our *Saviour*'s boſom at the *Paſchal* ſupper, and tho' St. *Peter* durſt not aſk his *Maſter* who it was that ſhould betray him, yet while St. *John* lay in this poſture, he, (by the inſtigation of St. *Peter*) propounded the queſtion, and thereupon was made to underſtand, that it was *Judas Iſcariot*, the ſon of *Simeon*. This favour our *Apoſtle* endeavour'd in ſome meaſure to anſwer by returns of particular kindneſs and conſtancy to our *Saviour*; for when the holy *Jeſus* went into the *Garden* of *Gethſemane*, he took *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, to be witneſſes of his *Agony:* But being betray'd by the treachery of *Judas*, and deliver'd

The peculiar favours conferr'd on him by our Saviour.

He was preſent at Jeſus's Agony *in the* Garden.

deliver'd into the power of the *Jews*, his *diſciples forſook him and fled*, (Matth. xxvi. 56.) but St. *John*, above all the reſt, ſoon recover'd himſelf, and return'd back to ſeek his *Maſter*, reſolutely entring into the *High-Prieſts* hall, and following our *Lord* thro' the ſeveral paſſages of his trial, and at laſt waited upon him at his *Crucifixion*, zealouſly owning him, in the thickeſt crowds of his moſt inveterate enemies. At this time it was that our *Lord* (upon the *Croſs*,) appointed him guardian of his own *Mother*, the bleſſed *Virgin*, *Joſeph* being then dead. *When he ſaw his Mother, and the diſciple ſtanding by whom he lov'd; he ſaid unto his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son:* "See, here is one ſhall "ſupply my place, and be to thee inſtead of a "*Son*, to love and honour thee, to provide and "take care of thee:" *And to the diſciple he ſaid, behold thy Mother.* (John xix. 26, 27.) "Her, whom thou ſhalt henceforth treat and "obſerve with that duty and honourable regard, "which the relation of an indulgent *Mother* "challenges from a pious and obedient *Son:*" Whereupon, *and from that hour that diſciple took her into his own home*, and made her a principal part of his charge and care.

He attends at the Crucifixion,

Was made guardian *of the* bleſſed Virgin.

Upon the day of *Chriſt*'s reſurrection, *Mary Magdalen* came early to the *ſepulchre*, and not finding our *Lord*'s body, ſhe went immediately to *John* and *Peter*, to give them an account of it: Which as ſoon as they heard, they preſently haſten'd to the *ſepulchre*, where ſeeing the *linen clothes* lie wherein his *bleſſed Body* was wrapp'd, they both concluded that he was ſtoln away, having not recollected that he was to *riſe the third day from the dead.* But ſoon after this St. *John* went a fiſhing, with other of the *diſciples*, to the *ſea* of *Tiberias*; and at the ſame time,

He viſited the ſepulchre *after* Chriſt's Reſurrection.

time, *Jeſus* appear'd to them upon the ſhore, tho' he was unknown to them all, till *John* gave notice to *Peter* that it was their *Lord*; after which they haſten'd all to ſhore, and din'd with him.

How long he reſided at Jeruſalem.

Our *Apoſtle* dwelt in his own houſe at *Jeruſalem*, till the death of the bleſſed *Virgin*, which happen'd about fifteen years after our *Saviour*'s aſcenſion. [x] Some time after her death, he journey'd into *Aſia Minor*, and there founded the Churches of *Smyrna*, *Thyatira*, *Pergamus*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea*, &c. which together with *Epheſus* make up the ſeven Churches which he mentions in his *revelations*. But having ſettled his affairs in *Aſia*, ('tis thought) he went more *Eaſtward*, and preach'd in *Parthia*, to which people, his firſt *Epiſtle* was anciently directed.

Aſia *his* Apoſtolical *province.*

He preached in Parthia.

Many years being thus ſpent (*i. e.* in propagating Chriſtianity; preaching where the Goſpel had not yet taken place, and confirming it where it was already planted) at length came the perſecution of *Domitian*; whereupon St. *John* being repreſented as a diſturber of the peace of the Empire, was ſent bound to [y] *Rome* by command of the *Proconſul* of *Aſia*, where he was treated with all the cruelty rage could ſuggeſt; and was at laſt, caſt into a *Cauldron of ſcalding oil* ſet on fire in the preſence of all the *Roman* ſenate. But his great *Lord* and *Maſter* (who favour'd him above all the *Apoſtles*, while he was on earth,) gave a clear demonſtration of his omnipotent power, by preſerving him in this danger, and ſecuring him, as the three *Hebrew captives* were,

Was ſent priſoner to Rome.

Was caſt into a Cauldron *of ſcalding oil.*

[x] Hiſt. Eccl. *lib.* 3.

[y] Percurre Eccleſias Apoſtolicas apud quas ipſæ adhuc Cathedræ Apoſtolorum, &c. habes Romam, &c. Ubi Apoſtolus Johannes poſteaquam in Oleum Igneum demerſus, nihil paſſus eſt, in Inſulam relegatur. *Tertull. de Præſcript. Hæret.*

in

in the midſt of a *burning furnace*. But this ſtrange and unexpected miracle had no effect upon the obdurate heart of the unrelenting *Emperor*; for he immediately baniſh'd him into *Patmos*, a diſconſolate *iſland* in the *Archipelago*; and being cut off from all ordinary converſation and ſociety of *men*, he was entertain'd with the more immediate converſes of *heaven:* For God open'd the cabinet of glory to him; giving him thoſe profound *revelations* by ſeveral viſions, which are tranſmitted to us in the *book* of that name.

He was baniſh'd into Patmos,

and there wrote his Revelations.

But it happen'd ſoon after, that *Domitian* being ſlain, *Cocceius Nerva* (a man of a mild diſpoſition) ſucceeded in the *Empire*; who immediately reſcinded the barbarities of his predeceſſor, and by publick *edict* recall'd thoſe from baniſhment, whom the fury of *Domitian* had ſent thither. St. *John* taking advantage of this general indulgence, was brought back from *Patmos*; return'd to *Aſia*, and fix'd his ſeat again at *Epheſus:* Where he liv'd in his old age among his friends. But, at his return, *Timothy* the former Biſhop of it being dead, he was importun'd to take upon him the care of that *dioceſs*, which he accepted and govern'd, till the reign of *Trajan*.

He returns to Epheſus, *and governs the affairs of that* Province.

St. *John* was ninty years old, (as *Epiphanius* relates) when he took upon him this care; about which time (at the earneſt entreaty and ſolicitation of the *Aſian* Biſhops) he wrote his *Goſpel*; firſt having enjoin'd them to ſet apart ſome time to faſt and pray for the aſſiſtance of heaven on ſo great an undertaking. In it he declares the divine nature of *Jeſus Chriſt*, as the other *Evangeliſts* do his humanity. The principal cauſe of his being ſo copious on that ſubject, was to obviate the *Hereſies* of thoſe times; and to confute *Cerinthus*, *Ebion*, the *Nicolaïtans* and others,

His Goſpel *when, and where written.*

others, who began openly to deny *Chriſt*'s Divinity, and his exiſtence before his incarnation. Another reaſon was, that he might ſupply thoſe paſſages of the evangelical hiſtory, which the reſt of the ſacred writers had omitted. But beſides this, our *Apoſtle* wrote three *Epiſtles*, which do to this day bear his name. The firſt whereof is *Catholick*, containing moſt excellent rules for the conduct of human life, and hath always been received by the *Church* without any ſcruple or objection. As for the two *others*, which are very ſhort, (as likewiſe the *Apocalypſe*) ſome little doubt hath been among the ancient (*Greeks* eſpecially,) and ſome modern *Cenſors:* But the ſtile, ſubject matter and publick teſtimonies of their authenticknes ſoon ſilenc'd all debates. The *Goſpel* of St. *John* is famous in all the Churches of the World, for its ſpirituality and divinity: And 'tis no wonder that a *Goſpel* compos'd by the inſpiration of the *Spirit*, ſhould be *ſpiritual* and ſublime. *Theodoret* ſtiles it, [z] *A Theology which to human capacities ſurmounts both the actual comprehenſion and the poſſibility of it. And St.* Cyril *of* Alexandria ſays, that [a] *whoever looks to the ſublimity of his incomprehenſible notions, the acumen of his reaſon, and the quick inferences of his diſcourſes conſtantly following upon one another; muſt needs confeſs, that his Goſpel perfectly exceeds all admiration.* For which reaſons he is generally (by the ancients) reſembled to an [b] *Eagle*, ſoaring above

He alſo wrote three Epiſtles,

and the Apocalypſe.

His Goſpel *univerſally admir'd.*

The ſubject of it ſublime and myſterious.

St. John *reſembled to an* Eagle.

[z] Θεολογίαν ἄβατον ἀνθρώποις καὶ ἀνυπέρβατον. *Comm. in Ezech.*

[a] Εἰς τε τὸ τῶν θεωρημάτων ὑπερφερὲς καὶ τὸ ἀληθείας αὐτῆς τὴν ὀξύτητα, καὶ τὴν συνεχῆ καὶ ἀλλεπάλληλον τῶν νοημάτων ἐπιφοράν. *Comm. in Joan.*

[b] Nemo, audeo dicere, tantâ ſublimitate ſapientiæ majeſtatem Dei vidit, & nobis proprio ſermone reſeravit, tranſcendit

above the Clouds of human weakneſs, and having a piercing ſight into high myſteries: And he truly anſwer'd his name, *Boanerges*; for he ſpake and writ like a *ſon of thunder*. He was alſo peculiarly honour'd with the title of *the Divine*; as if it were due to him in a more eminent and extraordinary manner. God gave him not only the knowledge of the myſteries he reveal'd, but an ability to expreſs them fully and ſtrongly: And tho' his ſtile be not florid and elegant, yet it is grave and pious, ſhort and perſpicuous.

Stiled Boanerges, *and the* Divine.

But before I conclude, I can't forbear reciting a moſt remarkable [c] *paſſage* of this *Saint*'s life, it being admirable in all the parts of it, and worthy our moſt ſerious attention: The ſum of which is this. Our *Apoſtle* coming to a place near *Epheſus*, eſpy'd a *youth* (of a comely ſhape and pregnant parts,) which he thought might become an eminent and uſeful perſon, if effectual care was taken of his education. Whereupon he delivers him to the *Biſhop* of that place, and lays the ſtricteſt injunctions upon him, to be very careful in cultivating the mind and manners of the *young man*. The good *Biſhop* undertook the charge, inſtructed his *pupil*, and baptized him. Which being done, he thought he might truſt him to his own conduct. But the *youth* ſoon made an ill uſe of his liberty, for falling into bad company, he let looſe the reins to all manner of exorbitancy; and agreeing with his confederates, they combin'd themſelves into a ſociety of *high-way men:* and in that flagitious company this *young man* quickly becomes

A very remarkable paſſage of St John's *life.*

tranſcendit nubes, tranſcendit virtutes cœlorum, tranſcendit angelos, & Verbum in principio reperit, & apud Deum vidit. *Ambroſ. Præf. Comm. in Luc.*

[c] Euſeb. *Eccl. Hiſt. lib.* 3. *c.* 20.

ſo

ſo great a proficient, as to be captain and leader of the fraternity. At this ſeaſon (as God would have it) the Apoſtle returns again into thoſe parts; and enquir'd of the *biſhop* after the *young man*, who with a dejected look, and with tears in his eyes, anſwer'd, *Alas, he is dead!* And being demanded by what kind of death; reply'd, He's *dead to God*, and all *goodneſs!* and is fled with his companions to the *Mountains* hard by to be a thief and a robber. The *Apoſtle* hearing this (aged as he was, without any conſideration of what danger he enter'd upon, in venturing himſelf upon perſons of deſperate fortunes, and forfeited conſciences) call'd for a horſe and a guide, and went to the *mountains*, where their uſual haunt was. There he no ſooner arriv'd, but he was arreſted by the *centinel thief*; yet without the leaſt fear or ſurprizal, he deſir'd to be brought before their *commander*. As ſoon as the captain heard this, he preſented himſelf arm'd to receive him: But he no ſooner perceiv'd who it was, but being ſeiz'd with ſhame, he ran from him with all the ſpeed he could. The holy *ſaint* (forgetting his age and weakneſs) followed after him with all his might; but being not able to overtake him, he cry'd out, "Why, O my Son! my Son! "doſt thou fly thy Father? thy aged unarm'd "Father? Fear not: I did not come to deſtroy "thee, but am deſirous to ſave thee; I'll pray "for thee; I'll intercede with *Chriſt Jeſus* on "thy behalf; I am ready to lay down my life "to ſave thy ſoul." The revolted *youth* hearing this, makes a ſtand, and then with eyes caſt down, and weapons laid aſide, he begins to be ſtruck to the heart, and at laſt weeping bitterly, he embrac'd the aged *Apoſtle* with all poſſible expreſſions of ſorrow and grief, inſomuch

that he was re-baptized in his own tears. Then St. *John* having fasted with him, and pray'd for him, return'd him a true penitent and convert to the *Church*.

This story (tho' somewhat long) I was willing to produce, it being so very *remarkable* in it self, and so noble an *example* of true repentance. We may from hence observe how a sense of guilt, and unwarrantable practices, *baffles* a man's spirit, *dejects* his courage, *disarms* and *subdues* him; whereas goodness and charity to the souls of men, *inspirits* and *actuates* a person above his age, temper, and common capacity. This aged *Apostle* forgot himself, to recover the dissolute *Youth*; he had a true compassion, and a flaming zeal for the soul of a desperate sinner. Here may we take notice, how he broke thro' all difficulties and discouragements to reduce mankind from the snares of a debauch'd and a vicious life. Certainly there is an inexpressible charm in virtue; there is an exquisite *lustre* and *beauty* in the countenance, voice, and motion of a good man; for how strange a thing was it to see a young Ruffian running away from an old *Apostle?* An armed *Captain* not daring to stand before unarm'd and infirm *old age?* Surely this instance is enough to persuade any considering man, that there must be a *divinity* in that *religion* that had such remarkable attestations.

What may be learnt from thence.

To conclude: Love and Charity was the constant practice of this blessed *saint:* 'Tis the great vein that runs thro' all his *writings*. He liv'd till the time of *Trajan*, who succeeded *Nerva*, about the beginning of whose reign he departed this life at *Ephesus*, in the ninety-eighth, or ninety-ninth year of his age, as is generally believ'd. He was bury'd at *Ephesus* in the city, where several *fathers* observe, that his tomb

St. John's *Love.*

His great Age *and* Death.

was then remaining in the Church, built to his honour, and call'd by his name: But as for those stories concerning his sleeping in his tomb, and the like, they are not worthy our notice. *Theophylact*, and others, affirm that he died a *Martyr*; but St. [d] *Jerom* observes, that tho' he was not put to death, yet that he justly challenges that honourable title, by reason of his manifold sufferings in the cause of *Christ*.

Epistle. 1 John 1. *from* ℣. 1. *to the end.*

MEDITATIONS FOR St. JOHN's DAY.

Gospel. John 21. *from* ℣. 19. *to the end.*

THERE is a spring of kindness and good-will in *parents* towards their *children*, which flows with that constancy, and bears such a mighty stream that nothing is able to divert the current; especially when they prove good and virtuous: Then the *parents* feel an unspeakable delight and satisfaction, and their *children* are the crown of their age, their joy and triumph. There is, in like manner, an everlasting propension in Almighty God to love his *children*; and upon their becoming obedient and holy, he not only takes infinite delight and complacency in them, but honours them with apparent testimonies of his favour and good-will: Of which we cannot have a more lively instance than in the *beloved disciple*. This holy person was called to his dignity when he was very young; at an age very much expos'd to the vanities and temptations of the world, and most averse to suffering: However, he stood out

[d] Comm. in Matth. 20. ut supra.

reſolutely againſt all kind of charms and terrors, and continued faithful to his *Maſter*, with the conſtancy and reſolution of more experienc'd years; and thus giving proof of a heart open to nothing but the love of *Chriſt*, was therefore above all *beloved* by him. He was admitted to *lay his head* in the *boſom* of the holy *Jeſus*; which honourable place was not given to any of the *aged*, but reſerv'd for our *Apoſtle*: And ſo he found the pleaſures of this world infinitely outdone! by the better and larger amends of grace and divine comforts in exchange. And doubtleſs the advantages of coming unto *Chriſt* in our youthful days are very conſiderable: God Almighty being extreamly delighted with an early piety; and the firſt-fruits of our lives, (when dedicated to his ſervice) are moſt acceptable to him. For as the curious eye of God obſerves the firſt *lines* and *traces* of nature, the firſt *eſſays* and *palpitations* of life; ſo he takes notice of the firſt *motions* of grace, of the moſt *weak* and *imperfect* eſſays of the new-birth, or, as the *Apoſtle* expreſſes it, when *Chriſt* is *beginning to be form'd in men*. And from the inſtant that a *man* commences a life of piety, he is inſtated in great honour; he contracts moſt noble relations, and (with the *beloved diſciple*) acquires his moſt illuſtrious titles, and glorious privileges. Such a *man* is *wiſer than the aged* (as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerves:) But why? Becauſe he *keeps the commandments* of his God; which makes him become the friend and favourite of heaven, and cauſes him to have a free acceſs unto the Almighty; a ſure protection under him; and a ready aſſiſtance from him in all his needs. This is the way to improve in *knowledge*, this is the point of true *wiſdom* and *perfection*. Holineſs is a noble and ſublime thing! God hath impreſſed upon it that beauty and majeſty

The advantages of an early Piety.

jeſty which commands an univerſal love and veneration. For *the righteous is* (not only in himſelf, but in common eſteem) *more excellent than his neighbour*, (Prov. xii. 26.) The fame of ſuch a perſon is, in the beſt judgments, far more precious and truly glorious than the fame of thoſe is who have excell'd in any other deeds or qualities. For what ſober *man* doth not in his moſt ſerious thoughts, pay a more extenſive veneration to the memory of this bleſſed *ſaint*, and to all thoſe poor *fiſhermen*, who by their *heroical* faith and patience did honour God, in the propagation of his heavenly truth, than to all thoſe *Heroes* in *Chivalry*; thoſe *Conquerors* and *Atchievers* of mighty exploits; (thoſe *Alexanders* and *Cæſars*) who have been renown'd for doing things that ſeem'd *great*, rather than for performing what was truly beneficial? To the honour of thoſe excellent *poor men* conſpicuous *Monuments* have been erected every where; anniverſary *memorials* of their names and virtues are celebrated; they are never mention'd or thought of without reſpect; and their *commendations* are interwoven with the praiſes of their great *Lord* and *Maker*, whom they honoured.

The beauty of Holineſs *illuſtrated.*

Thus hath God order'd it, that honour, and every thing that is praiſe-worthy, is the natural conſequence of piety and virtue. St. *John* took the moſt *compendious* courſe to attain the moſt *compleat* felicity. The happineſs he ſought after, was not that *tranſitory*, *imperfect* thing, which the children of this generation fondly covet and admire; but that *exquiſite*, that *infinite*, and *incomprehenſible* delight, of which the *pure in heart* receive ſome ſweet foretaſts and pledges; by having their converſation in heaven, while they themſelves are upon Earth. His ambitious labour was to be accepted of the

Piety, *what it comprehends.*

Lord, whoſe favourable teſtimony of his fidelity, would be his eternal honour, before the glorious and immenſe theatre of Angels and men at the great day. As for the world, he knew that it was vain, and all its comforts, like it, empty and unſatisfactory, falſe and fleeting, ſwift in decay, and of ſhort continuance: But thoſe from God, he found by experience, reſembled the perfections of their Author, he being made partaker (as a reward for his obedience and love to his great *Maſter*) of one of the greateſt inſtances of divine bounty. For certainly, the holy *Jeſus* could not have given a more honourable teſtimony of his particular love and kindneſs to St. *John*, than to commit his own *Mother* (whom of all earthly relations he held moſt dear and valuable,) to his truſt and care; and to ſubſtitute him to ſupply that duty, which he himſelf paid her, while he was here below. From hence we may learn, that whatever falſe notions of honour and greatneſs *men* may delude themſelves with, yet ſtill they have poor and little ſouls, who allow any thing beſides the infinite and eternal God, a very honourable place in their affections and eſteem. For how vaſt a difference is there, between the wiſdom of a *mortified pious man*, and the pompous learning of a *profound* and *ſtudious ſcholar?* That knowledge which deſcends from above, ſpeaks its heavenly original, by marvellous and noble effects, and works a greater change in the *man*, a greater improvement in profitable knowledge, than all that comprehenſion, which the *beſt* capacities, and the moſt *indefatigable* induſtry can ever attain to.

Its Dignity.

'Tis moſt efficacious to make men wiſe.

Why ſhould we then with ſuch eager toil, ſtrive to be maſters of ſuch learning as is uſeleſs, in compariſon of that which has *the words*

of eternal life? He whom the holy *Jesus* inſtructs doth attain knowledge, ſo as to become truly *wiſe*, and *learned* to purpoſe. Therefore ὁ εὐσεβὼν ἀκριβῶς φιλοσοφεῖ, *the pious man is the exquiſite philoſopher.* It is he that employs his mind upon the moſt proper and worthy objects; that knoweth things which certainly beſt deſerve to be known; that hath his ſoul enriched with the *ſublimeſt* notions: For having the *beſt Maſter* to inſtruct him in his ſtudies, and the *beſt rules* to direct him in his conduct, he cannot be miſtaken; ſeeing in his judgment and choice of things he conſpireth with infallible wiſdom. And as a comfortable addition to all this, when he hath paſs'd thro' the *ſhadow of death*, the next ſtep commences in *glory*; where he will ſtill be adorn'd with an infinitely greater meaſure of knowledge and wiſdom than is attainable in this life: And with this bleſſed *ſaint* (and with all thoſe who conſecrated their endeavours, and who ſacrific'd their lives for the promoting of God's honour,) live in *love*, and *peace*, and *joy* to all eternity. *Both* here, *and* hereafter.

The PRAYER.

O *Eternal and ever bleſſed Lord God! by the prerogative of whoſe ſpecial grace, the bleſſed Apoſtle St.* John *obtain'd that tranſcendent character of the* Beloved of his Maſter, *and afterwards became exemplary in his piety and charity over all the world: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that his holy example may encourage me to promote the honour, and ſerve the purpoſes of my great Creator: To eſteem my ſelf rich in no treaſure but thee; to love and delight in thee alone; and to take ſatisfaction in all things elſe, in ſuch degrees, and in ſubordination to ſuch purpoſes*

only, as thou haſt appointed; and to receive every diſpenſation of providence, with ſuch a ſpirit and temper, as becomes my duty, and may render it ſerviceable to the ends for which thou ſenteſt it. That ſo tranſcribing the pattern of this excellent ſaint, *both in my heart and practice, I may be tranſlated into thoſe manſions of bliſs where the ſouls of the faithful are in joy and everlaſting felicity: Thro' the merits and interceſſion of* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed Lord and Saviour.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

MErciful Lord! I beſeech thee to caſt thy bright beams of light upon thy *Church*, that it being enlightned by the doctrine of thy bleſſed *Apoſtle* and *Evangeliſt* St. *John*, may ſo walk in the light of thy Truth, that it may at length attain to the light of everlaſting life, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm *proper.* 132, 133, 134, 135. *Evening.* 136, 137, 138.

INNOCENTS DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Jer.* 31. *to* ℣. 18. 2 *Matt.* 25. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. *Wiſd.* 1. 2 1 *Cor.* 9.

WHEN *Jeſus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, in the days of Herod the King, there came wiſe men* (inſpir'd by God) *from the Eaſt to Jeruſalem; ſaying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have ſeen his ſtar in the Eaſt, and are come to worſhip him.* (Matt. ii. 1, 2.) This queſtion ſurpriz'd the people of *Jeruſalem*, but more eſpecially *Herod*, who was at that time *King of the Jews*; becauſe he fear'd the queſtion of the kingdom was in diſpute, ſince an *Heir* from heaven challeng'd it, and brought a *ſtar*, and the learning of the *Eaſt* with him, for evidence and probation of his title. Whereupon, he aſſembled the whole body of the *Sanhedrim*, conſiſting of the moſt *learned* of the *Jews*, and demanded of them, where the *Meſſiah* (which had been a long time expected) ſhould be born; and found by their joint determination, that *Bethlehem* of *Judæa* was the place deſign'd by ancient *prophecy*, and God's *decree*. As ſoon as he had receiv'd this information, he ſent for the *Magi*, or *wiſemen*, (who had publiſh'd this news) privately to him; and enquir'd of them at *what time the ſtar* (which they ſpake of) *appear'd*. (Matth. ii. 7.) As ſoon as they had inform'd him, *He ſent them to Bethlehem* with inſtructions *to ſearch diligently for the young child, and to bring him word*, pre-

Herod *ſurpriſed at the coming of the* Magi.

The Sanhedrim *convened.*

Herod *conſults the* Magi.

and pretended to worſhip Jeſus;

tending that *he would come and worſhip him.* (*v.* 8.) Upon this, the *wiſemen* departed from *Jeruſalem*, (ignorant of the deſigns of this cruel tyrant, who endeavour'd to reſcind the decrees of heaven, and reverſe the reſults and eternal counſels of God.) And being juſt got into the way to *Bethlehem*, they ſaw the *ſtar* again which had appear'd to them in the *Eaſt*, and it directed them to the very place *where the young child was.* But having enter'd, and paid the tribute of their offerings and adorations, God would not ſuffer them to return to *Herod*, but being admoniſh'd in a *dream* of his wicked devices, *they return'd into their own country another way.*

but was deluded.

For ſome time, *Herod* impatiently expected the return of the *wiſemen*, to hear what diſcoveries they had made; but finding himſelf *mocked* and diſappointed, he fell into a great rage, and reſolv'd to ſlay all the *children* in *Bethlehem*, and in the adjoining Villages, that were not above *two years old*, and accordingly put it in execution; thinking in this barbarous maſſacre to include *him*, whoſe deſtruction he chiefly aimed at. But God, (who glorifies his power, and exalts his mercy, by the inſtances of miraculous or extraordinary events) had provided a ſanctuary for the holy *Jeſus*; for ſeeing the ſecret purpoſes of blood which *Herod* had, he ſent his *Angel*, who *appear'd to Joſeph in a dream, amd commanded him to take the young child and his mother, and to fly into Egypt, and remain there* till farther orders. (Matth. ii. 13.) *Joſeph*, who was encircled with the ſecurities of the *divine providence*, (and was probably furniſh'd with a ſufficient treaſure for the expences of the journey by the *gold* which the *wiſemen had offer'd*) immediately obey'd this command.

Joſeph's *flight into* Egypt.

command. The holy Child being then in ſafety, God permitted *Herod* to proceed in the full courſe of his fury! No abatements or indulgences made for the lamentations and weeping of the diſtreſſed *Parents!* No conſideration for the affecting looks, and endearing ſmiles of the little innocent *Martyrs!* But his cruelty was ſo univerſal, that he caus'd his own *ſon*, (which was at nurſe in the coaſt of *Bethlehem*) to bleed to death! which made *Auguſtus Cæſar* to ſay, [e] *That it was better to be Herod's ſwine than his ſon.* The number of theſe *Infants* was very conſiderable, if rightly recorded by the *Greeks* in their *kalendar*, and by the *Æthiopian* liturgy, which they boaſt was written by St. *Matthew*; in which they reckon no leſs than fourteen thouſand ſlain; whereof (as *Baronius* out of *Philo*) tells us, his own *ſon* made up the ſad account. *Then was fulfill'd that which was ſpoken by Jeremy the prophet, ſaying: Lamentation and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted.* But all theſe paroxyſms of ſadneſs were attended with the wrath of an incenſed God: For in a ſhort time, the divine vengeance overtook the bloody *tyrant*. He was tormented with a lingring *fever* in his body! In his *bowels* with intolerable *cholicks* and *ulcers*; together with the *putrefaction* of his *genitals!* He was tormented with *gouts* in his *feet*, and with *convulſions* in his *nerves*; beyond the relief of *baths* and *medicines*; his body repreſenting an hoſpital of the *incurables*. Yet all theſe divine judgments made him but ſtill more *obdurate* and *impious*; for perceiving that he was juſt entring the *cham-*

Herod's *Maſſacre of the Infants.*

His ſad Diſtemper.

[e] Melius eſt (inquit) Herodis porcum eſſe quàm filium: quia ſc. Judæi porcos non mactant. *Macrob. Saturnal.*

bers

bers of death, he reſolv'd that the laſt ſcene of his life ſhould, for pure malice, and exalted ſpite, tranſcend all the reſt; becauſe he imagin'd (having exercis'd ſo much ſavageneſs every where throughout the nation) the *Jews* would triumph at his *death*. He, (ſick as he was) caus'd the chief perſons of the land, to be impriſon'd in a ſpacious place call'd the *Hippodrome*; and then calling his ſiſter *Salome* to him and her husband, extorted a promiſe from them to obey the following orders: "I am ſenſible "of the *Jews* hatred to my government and per- "ſon, and that my death will be a high ſatiſ- "faction to them; therefore I deſire you to "procure me ſome ſolace and diverſion in the "midſt of my bitter anguiſh; which if you "perform according to my order, the mourn- "ings and lamentations at my death will be as "great and magnificent as ever any Prince had. "So I deſire you juſt at the time of my expi- "ration, to command the ſoldiers to ſurround "the *Hippodrome*, and to put all the encloſed "perſons to the ſword, and then publiſh my "death. This will cauſe my *Exit* to be doubly "triumphant; firſt, for the execution of my "commands; and ſecondly, for the quality and "number of my mourners." But God (who brings to nought the counſel of the wicked,) reſcinded the deſigns of *Herod*; for ſoon after he died, and then all that were impriſon'd were ſet free, to the general joy and triumph of the whole land.

His cruel Orders,

and Death.

MEDI-

Epiſtle. Rev. 14. ℣. 1. *to* ℣. 6.

MEDITATIONS FOR INNOCENTS DAY.

Goſpel. Matth. 2. ℣. 13. *to* 19.

THAT there is a ſecret attraction and lovelineſs in *virtue*, and that God hath impreſs'd upon it that [f] *beauty* and *majeſty* which commands an univerſal love and veneration, hath been always acknowledg'd, even by thoſe very *men* that are the leaſt ſharers in it; in that they have made *Religion* a cloak for their wickedneſs, and a gloſs to give credit to their vileſt purpoſes. When *Jezabel* deſign'd the robbing and deſtroying *Naboth*, ſhe ſent to the *Elders* to proclaim a *Faſt:* And [g] *Sejanus*, when he was a young courtier, took care of nothing more than to grow famous for his integrity. Thus likewiſe *Herod* pretended *Religion*, in that he would *come and worſhip* the holy *Jeſus*, when his deſign was to make a ſacrifice of him, to whom he ſhould pay his adoration. He knew that the way whereby to make a ſin well-favour'd, was to make it look virtuouſly; and ſo intending to play the *Devil*, he was to perſonate a *Saint*. But certainly this is a daring affront to God's omniſcience, and [h] *no ſin* is more abominable to him, who knows to what ends thoſe blandiſhments are directed. He that *tramples under foot the Son of God*, does not ſo much violate him, as he that pretends to erect him a *Throne*

Religion *pretended to evil purpoſes.*

[f] Is gloriâ maximè excellit, qui virtute plurimùm præſtat. *Cic.*

[g] Sejanus, incipiente adhuc potentiâ, bonis conciliis noteſcere volebat. *Tacit. Annal. Lib. 4. p.* 116.

[h] Totius injuſtitiæ nulla capitalior eſt quàm eorum, qui tum, cùm maximè fallunt, id agant ut viri boni eſſe videantur. *Cic. de Finib.*

upon

upon blood and rapine: Nor does he that *accounts the blood of the covenant an unholy thing*, ſo much prophane it, as he that uſes it for a *varniſh* to paint over his impious deſigns. This is ſo great an abuſe to *Religion*, that the *Jews* ſay, that in the world to come, all may be forgiven but the *Serpent* and the *Gibeonites*; that is, *Hypocrites* and *Deceivers*: And even *Mahomet* makes ſeven caverns in *Hell*, and aſſigns the *loweſt*, and the *botteſt*, for the place of *Hypocrites*.

Hypocriſy *ignominious.*

But, without conſidering their *Portion* in the next World, no *man* on Earth is loaded with more reproach and folly than the detected *Hypocrite*. One time or other he is brought into open light; for *omniſcience* can defeat the greateſt *politician*, let him pretend never ſo *fair*, and tho' his plots be laid as deep as *Hell*. The heart of *Herod* was open to the eye of *Heaven*; and the *Sun* is not more viſible to us than his dark purpoſe was to God. No doubt, but he imagin'd himſelf very ſafe; and yet his extraordinary *depth* and *reach* was but *fooliſhneſs with God*, having acquir'd all his inventions in the *Devil*'s ſchool, and imitated the *politicks* of the *Kingdom of Darkneſs*; and it ſucceeded accordingly. The *Child* was *ſent away*; the *wiſemen warn'd* not to *return*; *Herod* was *mock'd* and *enrag'd*; and ſo his craft became *fooliſh* and *vain*. And indeed *ſin* and *folly*, *ſinner* and *fool*, are words in *Scripture* of a like ſignification, and are indifferently uſed one for the other. And we are taught likewiſe in the *ſchools of morality*, that *every ſinner is ignorant*: Πᾶς ὁ μοχθηρὸς ἀνοητός, ſays the *Socratical* proverb. This was verified in *Herod*: His ſinful deſign has its *birth* in folly; and every ſtep of its *progreſs* was folly; and its *concluſion* was in folly. And ſo is every action or deſign that is not governed by the immutable

table will of God, and the dictates of natural reason.

But, as soon as *Herod* perceived that his deceitful and corrupt proceedings made him but an object of scorn and folly, he was exceedingly [1] *enrag'd*; and so transported with *fury*, that he resolv'd, since he could not effect his designs by *craft*, he would by *violence*. Whereupon he *sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts* adjacent. But still this would not do; for the divine *Providence* took particular care of the holy *Child*, as it is wont to do of all those who confide in Heaven's inestimable mercy. God by secret *methods*, and undiscernable *trains*, ordereth all events; so that without his wise permission or determination, neither *men*, nor *devils*, can do us any hurt: For he having the over-ruling disposal of all the *ills* which they inflict upon us, can therefore render their *stings* a sovereign *balm*, and their rankest *poisons* medicinal to us; the most inveterate *malice*, if he pleases, shall do us *good*, and like *leaches* applied by a skilful *physician*, draw away our *disease* while it is sucking our *blood*. For so God made the malice of *Joseph*'s brethren the means of his advancement in *Ægypt*; and by the covetousness of *Judas*, and cruelty of the *Jews*, advanc'd the holy *Jesus* to his own *right-hand*, and executed his purpose to *redeem* mankind. And therefore *Plato* expresses himself very elegantly when he calls God ἰδέα τῦ ἀγαθῦ, *the idea or essence of goodness*. For indeed could we but discern from end to end, those manifold turnings and windings wherein divine *Providence* is engag'd for our

God's Providence *universal.*

The goodness of Providence.

[1] Deus jussit, & ità est, sibi pœna est omnis inordinatus Animus. *Aug. Conf.*

preservation,

preſervation, thro' the various occurrences of life; it would not only be matter of wonderful curioſity, but moſt pleaſing aſtoniſhment! Could we but ſee what a *labyrinth*, what a *maze* we tread, and what reaſon there is for every turning; could we ſee the bright *Hoſt* of auxiliary *Spirits* that incamp about us, and diſcover with what care and concern the good *Angels* conteſt on our behalf againſt the *Powers of Darkneſs*, and how many dangers, both *ghoſtly* and *bodily*, we eſcape thro' their protection: Could we, I ſay, ſee all this! we ſhould ſoon believe the truth, and underſtand the full *emphaſis* of a divine *Providence*; and be wonderfully entertain'd at the diſcovery of thoſe bright beams of *Wiſdom*, which ſhine thro' ſo many perſpicuous correſpondencies. In ſhort, every branch of the divine *Providence* is an unexhauſtible fountain of divine *rhetorick* and *perſuaſion*; and in this ſingle propoſition, that God upholds and governs the world, there are a thouſand inducements to *piety* and *virtue*. While I believe my ſelf under the conduct of a moſt *juſt* and *gracious*, *all-wiſe*, and *omnipotent Providence*, I can defie *Herod*, or any of his *emiſſaries:* For God over-rules the actions of *men*, and when he pleaſes, directs them quite contrary to their intentions; *the way of man is not in himſelf, it is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*, (Jer. x. 23.) It is the *man* that *walks* and *acts*, but it is God alone that *leads* his way, and *directs* his actions to what end he pleaſes.

The wiſdom of Providence.

It excites us to Obedience.

But perhaps it may be urg'd, that the Almighty could have ſecured the poor *Babes* of *Bethlehem*, at the ſame time when he caus'd the holy *Child* to *flie* from *Herod*. To which I briefly anſwer: That God is the ſole diſpoſer of all his *creatures*, and hath abſolute Dominion

An Objection *anſwer'd.*

nion over our lives; and he in his infallible preſcience had an end of *glory* to ſerve upon the *infants*, and an end of *juſtice* upon *Herod*. The great proprietor and Lord of life and death only *took away* the young *babes from the evil to come*; and made them ſuch compenſation, that they had no reaſon to complain, (as one expreſſes it) that they were ſo ſoon made *ſtars*, when they ſhin'd in their little *orbs* and *participations* of eternity: For it hath been the conſtant ſenſe of the *Church*, that the holy *Innocents* (who ſuffered in deed, but not in will) died the death of *Martyrs*, becauſe they ſuffer'd for *Chriſt*; and that God ſupply'd the defects of their *will*, by his own *acceptance* of the ſuffering. So that the cruelty of *Herod* became a very great advantage to the *Innocents*; for *martyrdom* is the higheſt advancement of *virtue* and *grace*, and conſequently intitles to the higheſt degrees of *glory*. It was thought of ſo great excellence in the primitive *Church*, as to ſupply the room of *Baptiſm*; and the new convert, whoſe early and ſudden execution prevented his ſolemn admiſſion into the *Chriſtian Church*, was yet eſteem'd a member of *Chriſt*'s myſtical body, and *numbered with his ſaints in glory everlaſting*.

The Innocents *died* Martyrs.

Martyrdom *a high degree of virtue.*

Having thus hinted at the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of divine *providence*, 'tis obvious likewiſe to conſider here the inflexible *juſtice* of it, which renders to every man according to his deeds. God Almighty permits the *wicked* ſometime to reign and be proſperous; but this is generally the prologue to a moſt deplorable cataſtrophe. *I my ſelf* (ſays the *Pſalmiſt*) *have ſeen the ungodly in great power, flouriſhing like a green bay-tree:* There's the preſent pomp and triumph of ſin. *But I went by, and lo he was gone; I ſought him, but his place could no where be found:* There's the

The juſtice of Providence

the unhappy close of the sad scene. Just so was the case of *Herod:* He enjoyed the pleasures of sin for a season, but it was not long, (for he liv'd but five years at the most after he had committed this unexampled massacre) before he was punish'd with a sad and unusual kind of death. In the like manner, several of the persecutors of *Christian Religion*, were cut off by untimely and strange deaths, as the consequents of their impiety. *Nero* kill'd himself; *Domitian* was kill'd by his servants; *Maximinus* and *Decius* were murther'd, together with their children; *Diocletian* perish'd by his own hand, and his house was burnt with the fate of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*, with fire from above; *Flaccus* vomited out his entrails presently after he had caus'd *Gregory* Bishop of *Spoleto* to be slain; and *Dioscorus*, the father of St. *Barbara*, who accus'd and betray'd his *daughter* to the *hangman*'s cruelty, for being a *Christian*, dy'd by the hand of God by fire from Heaven.

prov'd by several instances.

From hence we may observe the terrible monitions and menaces of God against such practices. And what remedy or excuse is there for such intolerable obstinacy? when the hand-writing upon the wall shews us what the event and issue of our folly will be; and that if we will be *wicked*, we must be *miserable:* If after this we persist in our impiety, if we choose destruction, and rush head-long into a ruin which we might easily avoid? And how deplorable soever our condition proves in the future state, God's *justice* will triumph in our ruin; and our own *consciences* will pronounce him to be most *wise*, most *just*, and *righteous* in all his ways.

What may be learn'd from hence.

The

The PRAYER.

O *Bleſſed and eternal God! who by the* Martyrdom *of the holy* Innocents *haſt taught thy* Church *that no age, or occaſion of ſuffering for our Saviour, is exempt from high reward; Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that my celebrating this feſtival, may make me adore this gracious diſpenſation of thy Providence; and how ſevere it may at firſt ſight appear to me, grant that my heart may be confirm'd in thy gracious promiſes, and that with the moſt profound ſubmiſſion I may reſign my ſelf, and all that belongs to me, to thine incomprehenſible wiſdom and goodneſs. O! awaken my ſoul, and all its faculties, that I may have the moſt ſublime and worthy apprehenſions of the divine goodneſs, which this imperfect ſtate will admit, till thou ſhalt take me to thy ſelf, and receive me into that participation of glory, where* Innocent *ſouls are in perfect joy and felicity, thro' the merits of my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus. *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who out of the mouths of babes and ſucklings haſt ordained ſtrength, and madeſt infants to glorifie thee by their deaths; mortifie and kill all vices in me, and ſo ſtrengthen me by thy grace, that by the innocency of my Life, and conſtancy of my faith even unto death, I may glorify thy holy name, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſal. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
Evening. 6, 7, 8,

The CIRCUMCISION of *CHRIST.*

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Gen. 17. 2. Rom. 2.
Evening. 1 Leſſ. Deut. 10. ℣. 12. 2. Col. 2.

MAN in the beginning was created perfectly holy and upright; and that he might continue ſo, was oblig'd by the law of his creation to obey the will of God, who had beſtow'd upon him life and happineſs: And therefore Almighty God, out of his unbounded wiſdom and goodneſs, was pleas'd to enter into a *Covenant* with *Adam*, in order to ſecure his obedience, and to preſerve his fidelity. But the terms of the *Covenant* being broken by the fall, God out of a merciful condeſcenſion to his creatures, puts forth a new edition of his laws in a ſecond *Covenant*, of which *Jeſus Chriſt* is the mediator. This new *Covenant* was a plank thrown forth to mankind, immediately after that woful ſhipwreck of the fall: For no ſooner had God denounc'd his deſerved doom on our lapſed parents, but, to ſupport them from ſinking into utter deſpair, he ſubjoins that gracious promiſe, (*Gen.* iii. 15.) *The ſeed of the woman ſhall break the ſerpent's head.* This promiſe was the firſt dawning of the new *Covenant*; and (ſo far as we can find) the only diſcovery of it to the *Antediluvian* world. Soon after the flood, mankind almoſt univerſally apoſtatiz'd from God to idolatry, inſomuch that the Church or ſociety of the true worſhippers of him, was quickly reduc'd to a very narrow compaſs. So that God ſeeing his Church almoſt totally extinguiſh'd,

by

by this general defection of mankind from his covenant, to recover and repair it, he calls *Abraham* out of his idolatrous country, and with him and his poſterity renews the *Covenant* which the reſt of mankind had renounc'd and deſerted; and to ſecure them from ever revolting from it, he ſeals and ratifies it with them by a ſign in their fleſh, *viz.* that of *Circumciſion*; which he gave them as a mark to diſtinguiſh and preſerve them diſtinct from the idolatrous nations round about them. Moreover, God was pleas'd to oblige himſelf to take *Abraham*'s poſterity for his peculiar people, to encreaſe their number, and to enlarge their power, to ſettle them in a rich and pleaſant country, (a type of that heavenly and better country that is above) and, which was the crown of all, that *in his ſeed all the nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed*; that is, the promiſed *Meſſiah* ſhould proceed out of his loins, who ſhould be a common bleſſing to mankind, in whom both *Jew* and *Gentile* ſhould be juſtified and ſav'd, and he by that means become (ſpiritually) *the father of many nations*. This *Covenant* was ratified and enſured on God's part by a ſolemn oath; *for when God made a promiſe to Abraham, becauſe he could ſware by no greater, he ſware by himſelf, ſaying, Surely bleſſing I will bleſs thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.* (*Heb.* vi. 13, 14.) On *Abraham*'s part it was ſeal'd with the Sacrament of *Circumciſion*, which God inſtituted as a peculiar federal right, to diſtinguiſh *Abraham*'s poſterity from all other people: For as all federal compacts have ſome ſolemn and external rites of ratification, ſo God was pleas'd to add *Circumciſion* as the ſign and ſeal of this *Covenant*, partly as it had a peculiar fitneſs in it to denote the promiſed ſeed, partly that it might be a diſcri-

The original of Circumciſion.

The reaſon of its inſtitution.

minating badge of *Abraham*'s Children from all other people. Accordingly *Abraham* himself, and all the *Jews* his posterity, did exactly observe this law: And *Jesus Christ* performing all the parts of an active obedience, submitted to it himself. *So when eight days were accomplish'd for the circumcising of the Child*, &c. (*Luke* ii. 21.) His name was call'd *Jesus*, &c.

The Circumcision *of* Christ.

But concerning *Circumcision*, four circumstances are particularly remarkable; *viz.* The *time*: The *place*: The *manner*: The *reason*. The *time* prescrib'd by the divine law for *Circumcision* was the *eighth day*, (*Gen.* xvii. 12.) Not sooner: The tenderness of the Infant not well till then being able to bear it, besides that the mother of a male child was reckon'd legally impure till the seventh day: Not later: Probably because the longer it was deferr'd, the more unwilling would parents be to put their children to pain, of which they would every day become more sensible. According to some allegorizing authors seven days signifie the time of this present world, and the eighth day the resurrection, when all corruption of the flesh shall be *cut off*, when this *corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality*. (1 *Cor.* xv. 33.) And they think therefore it was reasonable and necessary that *Circumcision* should be administred on the *eighth day*. To proceed: *Circumcision* was perform'd by cutting off the fore-skin, probably for these reasons: *First*, For that it was a seal of God's promise, that *Christ* should be born of *Abraham*'s Seed. *Secondly*, Because the propagation of original sin is traduced *per actum generationis*. Lastly, *Quoniam ordinabatur ad diminutionem carnalis concupiscentiæ, quæ propter abundantiam delectationis venereorum in illis membris præcipuè viget*. But as

The Time *when it was perform'd.*

The Place.

to

to the *manner* how *Circumciſion* was adminiſtred, 'tis thus recorded. Some of the relations that were preſent, held a veſſel full of duſt, into which they did caſt the *fore-skin* being cut off by the prieſt, with a ſharpen'd flint prepared for that purpoſe: At which time the parents, or ſureties, (which were of the ſame nature with thoſe we call *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*) impos'd names upon the children, as is likewiſe obſerv'd in *Baptiſm* which ſucceeds it; it being the ſame to us as *Circumciſion* was to the *Jews*: For as *Circumciſion* was a *Covenant*, whereby the *Jews* were bound to keep the whole law, (*Gal.* v. 4.) ſo is *Baptiſm* a *Covenant* [k] alſo, wherein we promiſe to obey the *Goſpel*. But what is farther obſervable, is the reaſon why *Chriſt* choſe to be *circumciſed*: For the holy *Jeſus* who had no ſin, nor was conceiv'd by natural generation, could have no pollution in his ſoul or body, which needed to be par'd away by this rite, or cleans'd by this myſtery: And conſequently was exempt from the chief reaſons of *Circumciſion*. Therefore his main deſign in expoſing his tender and immaculate body to the ſmart and anguiſh of that bloody rite, was to give a clear demonſtration of his univerſal and thro'-pac'd obedience to the law, who *came not to deſtroy it*, but to fulfil it in every circumſtance: *To fulfil all righteouſneſs*: As our bleſſed Saviour declares in the caſe of *John*'s Baptiſm. *Mat.* iii. 15.

The Manner.

The Reaſon.

It was an act of excellent obedience in Chriſt.

To conclude: At the *Circumciſion* he took upon him that name which declar'd him to be the *Saviour of the world*; which as it was finiſh'd in the blood of the Croſs, ſo was it commenced in the blood of *Circumciſion*: When *his name was called* Jeſus. *Luke* ii. 21.

He then received the name of Jeſus.

[k] *Matth.* xxviii. 20. Sed ut nunc nos paciſcimur in Baptiſmo ut abrenunciemus Diabolo, & operibus ejus. *S. Hieron.*

Epiſtle. Rom. 4. *from* ℣. 8, *to* 15.

UPON The CIRCUMCISION of *CHRIST.*

Goſpel. Luke 2. *from* ℣. 15, *to* 22.

WHether God, who is the great and mighty governor of Heaven and Earth, could, out of the inexhauſtible treaſures of his wiſdom and providence, have found out any other way for our *redemption*, than the ſending his *only-beloved Son* into the world, is an enquiry rather of curioſity and difficulty, than of uſefulneſs and importance. However I take this to be a ſafe concluſion, that the leaſt part of our *Saviour*'s ſufferings might have been ſatisfactory for the expiation and reconcilement of ten thouſand worlds: And God might, upon a leſs effuſion of blood, and a ſhorter life of merit, have excepted humane nature to pardon and favour.

The influence which the Circumciſion *of* Chriſt *ought to have on our lives.*

And what can more powerfully move and perſuade us to a ſincere univerſal *obedience*, than to conſider how *Chriſt* on this day ſubjected himſelf to the law of *Circumciſion?* He refuſed not the ſignature of this *bloody Covenant*, tho' it bore the character of a *Sinner:* and ſacramentally reſcinded the impure reliques of *Adam*, and contradiction of evil cuſtoms; which was the greateſt inſtance of *humility*, and the moſt tranſcendent act of *obedience* that is imaginable! Thus was he perfectly obedient to the law of his *Father*; and conſidering the dignity of the perſon obeying, it exceeded the *obedience* of all the *Angels*, as much as the *divine Nature* exceeds the *created*. And how glorious it is to follow the ſteps of the *Son of God*, in whom there was an union of all *divine* and *humane* perfections!

And

And ſince it is his intention that we ſhould become *partakers of the divine Nature*, let us obey God in all his *ſanctions*, and be ſtrictly careful that we loſe no degree of ſpiritual advantage.

And to the end that we may be conſiſtent in our *obedience*, let us expreſs our duty to God by reverencing his *Sacraments*; eſpecially *Baptiſm*, ſince it was appointed for the ſame end that *Circumciſion* was, and did ſucceed in the place thereof. And it is very reaſonable that we ſhould prize it at a high rate, and look on it as the inſtrument of ſecuring to us the greateſt bleſſings we can receive. For it enters us into *Covenant* with God, makes us *members of* Chriſt, and ſo gives us a right to all thoſe ineſtimable benefits that flow from thence on condition we perform our parts of the *Covenant*. We are all by *nature dead in ſin*, and lie under the *guilt* and *power* thereof: And therefore God Almighty out of his abundant *goodneſs* and *mercy* doth here in *Baptiſm* ſeal a *Covenant* with us, wherein he promiſeth to pardon us; ſo that all our ſins are cancell'd in the holy *Font*, and an infinite debt is paid in an inſtant. In conformity hereunto both *Scripture* [l] and *Antiquity* [m] teach us that *Baptiſm* is the means of remiſſion of ſin, and part of the *principles of the doctrine* of our [n] Religion. Moreover, by *Baptiſm* we acquire new relations; for God doth hereby become our *Father*; and the bleſſed

Baptiſm, *the nature of this* Sacrament *conſider'd and explain'd.*

The remedy againſt original Sin.

l *Luke* iii. 3. *Acts* ii. 38. *Ch.* xxii. 16.

m Omnem autem enormitatem ſceleris Baptiſmi Sacramenta diluunt.

n *Heb.* vi. 2. Eccleſiæ janua, porta gratiæ, & primùs introitus ſanctorum ad æternam Dei & Eccleſiæ conſuetudinem. *S. Aug.* Sacramentum initiationis, & intrantium Chriſtianiſſimam inveſtituram. *S. Bernard.*

Jeſus our *Maſter*; the *Holy Spirit* the *Earneſt* of our inheritance, and all the *Saints* both in *Heaven* and *Earth* our *brethren*: *Heaven* is the object of our hope, and the mighty prize of our high calling. But this is not all: *Baptiſm* is a ſtrong obligation to *holineſs*, and a remedy againſt *ſin*, becauſe our *faith* is herein moſt ſolemnly engag'd; a promiſe is made in our *name* that we ſhould *believe all the articles of our chriſtian faith*; by which is meant, not only the *conſenting* to the truth of them, but alſo the *living* like them that do believe. The believing that God *created us*, ſhould make us live in that ſubjection and obedience to him which becomes *Creatures* to their *Creator*; the believing that *Chriſt redeemed us*, ſhould make us yield up our ſelves to him as his purchaſe; the believing a *judgment to come*, ſhould make us walk circumſpectly, that we may not be condemned in it, and our believing *the life everlaſting*, ſhould make us diligent to employ our ſhort moment of time here, that our *everlaſting life* may be a *life* of *everlaſting joy* and *bliſs*. The ſumm is, *Baptiſm* doth *ſeal* a *pardon* to us for all former tranſgreſſions, and *begets* us again to the *hope* of eternal life; it *reſtores* us to the favour of God, and *gives* us a new *relation* to him; and finally, it *make* us *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*; and upon condition of keeping our part of the *Covenant*, we ſhall ſtand immoveable as a *Rock*, ſtable as an *Angel*, inſomuch that the *World*, the *Fleſh*, and the *Devil*, and all the *powers of Darkneſs*, cannot prevail againſt us.

Againſt the power of Sin.

The duty it engages us to.

But, in the *Circumciſion* of our Lord, let us conſider how at that time he received the holy name of *Jeſus!* which was given him by

by the direction of an *Angel*, ° becauſe he ſhould *ſave his people from their ſins*: (*Matth.* i. 21.) And indeed I cannot imagine any deſign whatſoever, excepting this, that could be worthy the *Son of God's* coming down from *Heaven*, and leaving the *muſick* of *Angels*, to undergo the *rigour* of the *law* in every circumſtance. Had it been only to ſave us from *war* or *famine*, it had been an undertaking fit for the loweſt *Angel* in the heavenly *Hierarchy*: But *to ſave us from our ſins*, was an enterprize ſo truly *great* and *glorious!* as none in *Heaven* or *Earth*, but the *Son of God* himſelf, was thought worthy to be employ'd in. *There is no name given under Heaven by which we can be ſav'd, but only the* adorable *name of* Jeſus! Therefore we need not go about to ſpell out our names in the *Stars*, or to read them in the ſecret volumes of eternal *Predeſtination*. And ſince the *Saviour* of the *World* has done and ſuffered ſo much *to ſave us from our ſins*, if we do but live in conformity to the *divine laws*, and ſubdue our *wills* to the *will* of God; we may be as infallibly aſſured of our intereſt in eternal life, as if one of the winged *Meſſengers* from above ſhould deſcend on purpoſe to tell us, that he ſaw our *names* enrolled in the volumes of *Eternity*. For ſince the holy *Jeſus* has redeemed us, the foundation of *Heaven* is already laid; and if upon this principle we grow in *grace*, and add one degree of *virtue* to another, we may be ſure the *ſuperſtructure* will go on, until the whole fabrick is compleated; until it grows unto *a building of*

Jeſus the importance of that name.

The influence it ought to have upon us.

° Jeſus Hebræo ſermone *Salvator* dicitur. Etymologiam ergo nominis ejus Evangeliſta ſignavit, dicens, *vocabis nomen ejus Jeſum quia ipſe ſalvum faciet populum ſuum.* S. Hier.

God

God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, 2 Cor. v. 1.

The PRAYER.

O *Moſt indulgent Father! the bountiful giver of all bleſſings, who for our comfort and example, didſt ſuffer thy beloved Son to ſubmit his pure and virginal body to the ſeverity of the law for man; Teach me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, to follow ſo bleſſed and holy a precedent, that I may be humble and obedient to thy ſacred laws, ſtrict and regular in my religion, mortified in my body and ſpirit, and* circumciſed *in heart and in the inward man; that what my bleſſed Lord did repreſent in ſymbol and myſtery, I may really expreſs in a pious and mortified life, cutting off whatſoever may miniſter to the fleſh, or any of its ungodly deſires: That I may do no diſhonour to the* name *whereby I am called, but may do thee honour and worſhip in the exerciſe of thy pure religion here on Earth, and ſing eternal* Hallelujahs *to the ſacred and myſterious Trinity in the world to come, thro' the merits of my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus. *Amen. Amen.*

The COLLECT.

ALmighty God! who madeſt thy bleſſed Son to be *circumciſed*, and obedient to the law for man; grant me the true *Circumciſion* of the Spirit, that my heart and all my members being mortify'd from all worldly and carnal luſts, I may in all things obey thy bleſſed will, thro' the ſame, thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

The

St Matthew Chap. II.

The Adoration of Christ by the Wisemen.

St Matthew 2. Verse 11.

And when they had open'd their Treasures, they presented unto him Gifts; Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh.

Morning. Pſal. *prop.* 30, 31.
Evening. 32, 33, 34.

The FEAST of EPIPHANY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Iſa. 60. 2 Luk. 3. *to* ℣. 23. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Iſa. 49. 2. Joh. 2. *to* ℣. 12.

GOD, having from the very infancy of the world promiſed the *Meſſiah*, as the great Redeemer of mankind; was accordingly pleaſed in all ages to make gradual diſcoveries and manifeſtations of him; the revelations concerning him in every diſpenſation of the *Church*, ſtill ſhining with a more particular light, the nearer this *Sun of Righteouſneſs* was to his riſing. *In the fulneſs of time God ſent his Son into the world.* But becauſe it was not fit ſo great a perſon ſhould deſcend to Earth, without ſome remarkable ſign, God was pleaſed to give notice of it to all the world, (as they were repreſented by the grand diviſion of *Jews* and *Gentiles*) firſt to the *Jewiſh Shepherds* by an *Angel*, and then to the *Eaſtern Magi* by a *Star*. Long before our *Saviour*'s birth, ſeveral perſons that were great lovers of *Aſtronomy*, had expected the revelation of a mighty Prince in *Judæa*, at ſuch time when a miraculous and extraordinary *Star* ſhould appear: This was occaſion'd by a prophecy of *Balaam*, recorded by *Moſes*, *That there ſhall come a Star out of Jacob*, &c. (*Numb.* xxiv. 17.) which prediction undoubtedly related to the *Meſſias*. And therefore, when *Jeſus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa, there came* certain eminent *Philoſophers* and *Aſtronomers from the Eaſt of Jeruſalem*, and asked, Where the perſon was, who

The gradual revelations of the Meſſiah.

Magi, *their expectation of the* Meſſiah.

who was lately *born King of the Jews*; declaring that they had *ſeen* his *Star* in their own country, and that being conducted thither by it, they were *come to worſhip him.* Theſe *Magi* were learned men; men dedicated to contemplation, and ſearchers into the ſecrets of nature, and ſuch as excell'd in all humane literature. And therefore, when they ſaw that the *Heavens* ſo apparently *declared the glory of God*, and that *the Firmament ſhew'd his handy-work* after ſuch a ſtrange and unuſual manner, they knew very well that it portended ſome great news unto the world. And indeed it was the admiration of [p] St. *Chryſoſtom* (as one obſerves) that ſuch a plenty of miracles concurred to our *Saviour*'s birth, ſuch a conjunction of rarities and uncommon accidents, as exceeded not only man's underſtanding, but his wonder. The *Holy Ghoſt* over-ſhadoweth the bleſſed Virgin. A Virgin brings forth! Angels proclaim the birth! Shepherds have viſions! Stars demonſtrate *Chriſt!* Heathens adore him! and Heaven and Earth contend in joy and duty at the Incarnation of the God of both of them! But among all theſe, the appearance of this great luminary from Heaven was truly miraculous; for it is manifeſt that this [q] *Star* was not an ordinary one, but differed by many degrees from *other Stars in Glory*, becauſe it gave light in the broad day. And this rais'd up the *wiſe-men* into wonder and curioſity to *go*, *ſee*, and *adore* this *new born Prince*, according to the purport of that known prophecy, *Pſal.* lxxii. 10. For an

Eaſtern Magi, *what.*

Star, *at* Chriſt's Birth, *miraculous.*

[p] Ποῖα χὴ πόσα θαύματα ὧδε τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ γενέσιας ζυμβαίνει. Χρυσόσομ. ὁμιλ. ὑπὲρ παθ.

[q] Hæc Stella, quæ Solis rotam
Vincit decore ac lumine. *Prudentius Hym. de Epiph.*

inſpiration

inſpiration from the Spirit of God, clos'd in with their virtuous eſſays, and admoniſh'd them to obſerve the *Star*, and to follow it till they had found the Lord of life and glory. Whereupon, as ſoon as they were got into the way to *Bethlehem*, they enjoy'd again the Harbinger of light; at which happy re-appearance they *rejoic'd exceedingly*, for it went before them to conduct them, and all the while attended their motion, until it came and *ſtood over where the young Child was*. And then finding that they had finiſh'd their courſe, their joy was heightened with the approach of fruition: And to compleat their inconceivable happineſs, they entred the houſe, and there ſaw the holy *Jeſus* with *Mary his Mother*, having nothing but a *Star* over his head to diſtinguiſh him from the miſeries of a poor and empty fortune. However, theſe *ſages* were *too wiſe* to be diſcourag'd at ſo mean an appearance; for on the contrary, being convin'd by that teſtimony from *Heaven*, and the conjunction of all circumſtances, they *fell down and worſhipped him*: Not with an empty ſalutation, but with oblations; for *when they had open'd their treaſures, they preſented unto him gifts, gold, frankincenſe, and myrrh*, which were very ſignificant [r] *emblems*: Offering *gold* as being a *King*; *frankincenſe* as being *God*; and *myrrh* as being a *Man*. Having been thus ſatisfied with the pleaſures of *Religion*, and taught (as a perſon of good learning diſcourſes) by that rare demonſtration which was made by *Chriſt*, how man's happineſs did not at all conſiſt in the af-

The Star *conducted them to the* Meſſiah.

They rejoic'd exceedingly.

They adore the holy Jeſus.

[r] Aurum, Thus, Myrrham, Regiq; Deoque, Hominiq; Dona ferunt. *Juvenc.*
Aurea naſcenti fuderunt munera Regi,
Thura dedêre Deo, Myrrham tribuêre Sepulchro. *Sedulius.*

fluence

fluence of worldly *poſſeſſions*, or the tumours of *honour*; they renounc'd the *world*, and retir'd empty into the receſſes of *Religion*, and the delights of *Philoſophy*.

Epiphany, *the ſignification thereof.*

To conclude, This feaſt of the *Epiphany* was ever accounted a famous *Feſtival*, and is properly ſtyled the day of *Apparition*, or *Manifeſtation* of *Chriſt* from above. It had its name from a three-fold *Apparition* or *Manifeſtation* commemorated upon this day, which all happen'd, tho' not in the ſame year, yet upon the ſame day of the year, and ſo it may be truly called ἐπιφάνεια ἐπιφανειῶν. The *firſt* was the appearance of the *Star*, which guided the *wiſemen* to *Chriſt*. The *ſecond* was the famous appearance at the *Baptiſm* of *Chriſt*, when all the perſons in the holy *Trinity* did ſenſibly manifeſt themſelves: The *Father* in the *voice from Heaven*, the *Son* in the river *Jordan*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* in the ſhape of a *Dove*. The *third Manifeſtation* commemorated at this time was that of *Chriſt*'s divinity; which appear'd in the firſt *miracle* that he wrought in *turning water into wine*. All theſe three *appearances* contributed to the ſolemnity of this *Feſtival*; but the moſt *remarkable* of all is that of which I have been now treating.

Three Appearances commemorated upon this Feſtival.

Epiſtle. Epheſ. 3. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 13.

MEDITATIONS UPON The EPIPHANY.

Goſpel. Matth. 2. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 13.

Honour, *the deſire whereof is univerſal.*

HOnour is an appendage of life ſo *highly* eſteemed, and ſo very *eagerly* ſought, that it has the moſt *prevailing* influence upon the conduct of men. It is accounted of higheſt price

price among all the objects of human desire: We endure any thing for its sake; despise every thing in comparison of it; even life itself is not thought a purchase too dear to compass it. It is observable that *honour* is the main spring of most undertakings in the world; 'tis for this that *Princes* contend, great *Battles* are fought, and difficult *Undertakings* are perform'd with indefatigable vigour: 'Tis for this that men search so greedily after *Knowledge*, and fill their heads with abstruse *Speculations*; that the *Merchant* travels into new and unknown countries, and that the *sons of men* in general, *haste to rise up early, and so late take rest*. And indeed 'tis so deeply implanted in our natures, that the arguments of the most self-denying *Philosophers* prove very insignificant: They may write large *volumes*, and make tedious *harangues* against the desire of it, which yet they possibly contradict in their prosecution of things; and I have been tempted to believe that they only strive to *beat down* the price of this commodity, that they may more easily *engross* it to themselves. 'Tis hardly imaginable that *Chrysippus* would have wrote (as we are [f] informed) 700 Books, had it not been to shew the *subtilty* and *sharpness* of his wit. But however, I take the opinion of those who *grounded* their judgment upon notions agreeable to common sense and experience, and *adabted* their rules of practice to the nature of man, to be of greatest authority. Such *men* have rank'd *honour* among the principal of things desirable, and adorned it with the most expressive *encomiums*: And indeed considering that the *wise Author* of our *beings* originally implanted in us the desire of *honour* for

[f] Laertius.

most

moſt *wiſe* and *noble* purpoſes, *viz.* as an *engagement* to *virtue*, and a *reſtraint* from *vice*; and as a ſerviceable *inſtrument* for the conſtitution, conſervation, and improvement of humane ſociety: I muſt conſequently take the love of it (rightly grounded and duly moderated) to be of no ſmall *magnitude* and *luſtre* in the conſtellation of *virtues*: Becauſe true *generoſity* and *nobleneſs* of mind, doth *raiſe* a man's affections *Heaven-wards*, and *elevate* him above the ſordid deſires, and trivial enjoyments of an unſatisfying world; and *inſpires* him with a Chriſtian *courage* and *reſolution*, joyfully to attend upon, and (with the *Eaſtern Sages*) humbly to *adore* the Lord of life.

The uſe that may be made of it.

Now I hope it will not be thought an unfriendly attempt to endeavour to put men into that *path* which leads directly to *Glory* and *Honour*; and there is not a more *eaſie* and *compendious* method than to follow the ſteps of theſe *wiſemen*: They had the trueſt notion of *Honour*, being not only ſenſible that *the fear of the Lord was the beginning of* the moſt profound *wiſdom*, but finding by experience that it was the compleat *end* of it too; for they no ſooner had the *means of Grace* offer'd them, but they were careful to make a right uſe of it, and to ſecure to themſelves that *Honour which comes from God alone*. (*John* v. 11.) They were no ſooner inform'd of the *Birth* of the holy *Jeſus*, by the appearance of an unuſual *Star*, but forthwith they undertook their *journey*; neither regarding the avocations of the world, which would charge them with folly and precipitancy; nor conſidering the dangers of going to proclaim a *new-born King*, at the *Court* of an *incens'd Prince*; nor apprehenſive of thoſe many difficulties that are the uſual conſequences of a long and uncer-

The Eaſtern Magi *had the trueſt notion of* Honour.

Their Courage and Reſolution.

tain

tain *journey*. Their entrance into the *poor Stable* was but a prologue to their being received into the *King's palace*; into that new *Jeruſalem*, where they ſhall have *pearls* and *gems* in exchange for their *gold*, *frankincenſe*, and *myrrh*; where they will be beautiful without the help of art or nature, by the mere reflection of the divine brightneſs; be all that they can wiſh, and infinitely more than we can here imagine.

But to proceed: As God's love is univerſal, ſo is the Diſpenſation of it; he ſent a miraculous *Star* to invite and lead all the World to a new and more glorious light, but none cooperated with this Invitation, but only the *wiſemen*. Their *learning* was duly and rightly improved, and therefore it diſpoſed them unto a capacity of diviner knowledge: For their diſcoveries were converted to greater deſigns than their *art* of itſelf could produce; their *employment* being changed into grace, and their *learning* heightned with inſpiration. Had they been acquainted with all the *Stars* and *Luminaries* of *Heaven*, and not with *this* which conducted them to *grace* and *glory*, they had only had light enough to lead them into manſions of obſcurity: But God Almighty was pleaſed to *encourage* their pious inclinations; he *enlightned* their underſtandings and faculties by his aſſiſting *grace*, and ſo their innocent curioſity became inſtrumental to ends higher than all the art of man could produce. This is a *gift* truly divine! without which no *endowments* or *qualifications* of nature, are of any worth or ſignificance at all! *Sciences* and *Arts*, *riches* and *power*, *wit* and *eloquence*, are not in any degree valuable, if not *ſeconded*, and *perfected* by *grace*: And this is a *gift* ſo excellent, that neither the gift of *prophecy*, nor the power of *working miracles*, nor

The learning *of the* Magi *rightly improv'd.*

the underſtanding of the moſt *ſublime* and *abſtruſe myſteries*, can recommend us to God without it.

I muſt confeſs, there are many men affect to be knowing; they endeavour to penetrate the profoundeſt *myſteries*; they make oſtentation of all their *diſcoveries*, and pretend to *demonſtration*: They labour to diſtinguiſh themſelves from the herd of Mankind; to be thought *wiſer* and more *acute* than the reſt of the World, and would be *extoll'd* and *admir'd* for all that they ſay or do: They make the good of this world their aim, and ſeek no farther for their reſt and happineſs. But theſe are falſe appearances of *worth* and *perfection*: Such Men act only by a ſpirit of *pride* and *curioſity*, being much more ſollicitous to diſpute learnedly for the truth, than for adorning it by their *lives*, and rendring that knowledge effectual to *ſalvation*. Therefore an underſtanding thus improv'd is no deſirable thing, unleſs connected with *duty*; 'tis this which gives it a ſuitable *guſt* and *reliſh*, and converts it into a moſt *valuable* and *tranſcendent* bleſſing. Suppoſe I were let into the knowledge of this *ſyſtem* and *fabrick* of the univerſe, and the infinite variety of *creatures* contain'd in it; whatever the opinion of the *world* may be, I am aſſured by the *Apoſtle*, that ſuch *wiſdom is fooliſhneſs* with *God*, (1 *Cor.* viii. 19.) unleſs it excited my *wonder* and *praiſe*, and moſt humble *adoration* of his incomprehenſible *Majeſty*, and *goodneſs*, and *wiſdom*, and *power*, who is the great *Maſter-builder*, the conſtant *preſerver* and *governor* of all, and every part of it. Whoſoever then emulates the title of a *wiſe man*, muſt follow the example of the *Eaſtern Magi*, who were wiſe unto *ſalvation*. They united their ſouls to holy *Jeſus*, who is the fountain

Learning without Piety inſignificant.

Example of the Eaſtern Magi, worthy of our imitation.

fountain and perfection of all *wiſdom*: This ſpiritualiz'd their natures, and let them into thoſe ſpacious fields of learning, which afforded them both exerciſe and delight. Thus they taſted the *Tree of Knowledge*, upon which there lay no *interdict*; which inſtructed not as that in *Eden* did, by ſad and coſtly experience, but by joy and contemplation.

But it is farther obſervable, that the *wiſe-men* had no other deſign than to *worſhip* and *adore* their *new born King*: *Firſt*, In proſtration of the *body*, which was a very decent ſignification of their reverence and zeal; for when we are before the *King of Kings*, whoſe *Empire* is univerſal, and his *Dominion* boundleſs, we may well adviſe one another to uſe the moſt lowly geſtures that may expreſs our holy fear of and awful regard to ſo great a Majeſty. *Secondly*, In adoration of the *ſoul*, which was a reaſonable ſervice, moſt agreeable to the divine Nature. God himſelf *is a Spirit, and they that worſhip him, muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth*, ſays he, (*John* iv. 24.) who beſt knew both what he was, and what he expects from us. The truly *wiſe Man* is in ſome ſenſe a *Prieſt* of the high God: His *mind* is God's Temple, and the houſe where his honour dwelleth: His *ſoul* is God's image, a ray or reflection of that brightneſs and glory above: His *affections* and *appetites*, like ſo many oblations, are all conſecrated, and entirely devoted to his uſe and ſervice: And his great, his daily, his moſt ſolemn ſacrifice, is to imitate, and ſerve, and obey him. But *Thirdly*, The *Magi* having offer'd their *ſouls* and *bodies* to be a *reaſonable, holy, and lively ſacrifice to God*, they ſtill confirm'd their high veneration by *offering* him *preſents*: They reſign'd their *counterfeit* for *real* delights in exchange;

They worſhip the holy Jeſus *with their* Bodies.

And their Souls.

Their Offerings.

change; they parted from their *gold* for a *crown of glory*, which outvies the moſt profuſe donations of the greateſt potentates: They did not *appear before the Lord empty*. But here let me take notice, that God cares not for our riches; *for the whole world is his, and all that therein is*: He who is eſſentially happy in himſelf, can receive no acceſſion to his felicity by the poor contributions of men: And however he may graciouſly condeſcent to interpret *works of mercy* done for his ſake, yet it is a prodigy of vanity to think of benefitting him, from whoſe liberal hand alone it is that we receive our own ſubſiſtance.

Concluſion. All that I have to add, is, to deſire men to betake themſelves entirely to God, to *love* him with all their *hearts*, and all their *ſouls*, and to bid a final adieu to all terreſtial enjoyments, whenever they come in competition with their duty to him; and then they will find joy unſpeakable. Let us learn to deſpiſe theſe outward vanities, and ſeek pure and ſpiritual ſatisfactions; let us make it our conſtant care and buſineſs, as well as entertainment and delight, to be continually exercis'd in the contemplation of the holy *Jeſus*; for this is the trueſt, the nobleſt, the moſt refin'd and ſpiritual way of living, and beſt accommodated to the *glory* of *God*, the *comfort* and *ſafety* of our own ſouls, and the general *good* of mankind. By this method we ſhall feel our ſelves acted in *Religion* by a new ſpirit; we ſhall feel a heavenly *grace* ſpringing up within us, and growing on to maturity by inſenſible degrees, till at laſt all our *duty* will be naturaliz'd to us, and we ſhall do God's *Will* upon *Earth* with almoſt the ſame chearfulneſs and alacrity, as it is done by our bleſſed *Brethren* in the heavenly Choir.

The

The PRAYER.

O *Immaculate Lamb of God! co-eternal and co-equal with the Father, who wert pleaſed by the guidance of a miraculous* Star *to call the* Gentiles *to the adoration and knowledge of thy ſacred perſon and laws; communicating the ineſtimable riches of thy grace to mankind, with an univerſal undiſtinguiſhing love: Grant, I beſeech thee, that my heart and mind may be ſpiritualized by the Remembrance of this wonderful providence; and that every motion or invitation of grace may produce ſuitable effects upon me: O let thy holy Spirit illuminate my underſtanding with the knowledge of thee; my will, with ſubmiſſion and obedience to thee; and my affections, with deſire of thee, and endeavour towards thee: So ſhall I ſhew forth thy praiſe, not only with my lips, but in a holy and religious life; and ſpend the remainder of my days in a joyful hope of being made partaker of a glorious reſurrection unto life eternal, thro' thy merits, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and redeemer* Jeſus, *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

O God! who by the leading of a *Star* didſt manifeſt thine only begotten Son to the *Gentiles:* Mercifully grant, that I who know thee now by Faith, may after this life have the fruition of thy glorious Godhead, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning.
Pſalm
Proper.
6. 32. 38.

Evening.
102. 130.
143.

ASH-WEDNESDAY.

Morning.
1 Leſſ.
Iſa. 58.
2 Luk. 5.
Evening.
1 Leſſ.
Joh. 3.
2 Leſſ.
1 Cor. 7.

ASH-*Wedneſday* is the beginning of the great and ſolemn Faſt of *Lent*, and is generally called by the ancients, *Caput Jejunii*; as being a day of extraordinary humiliation. The *Church* begins her *Lent* this day, which with the addition of the other three days of the week, ſupply the *Sundays* in *Lent*, (whereon the cuſtom was not to faſt, becauſe they were Feſtivals, commemorating the glorious Reſurrection of our bleſſed Redeemer:) So that deducting out of *Lent* the ſix *Sundays*, there will remain but ſix and thirty *Faſting-days*; to which the four of this week being added, make the juſt number of forty. This day is a decent and neceſſary introduction to the great Faſt; and is called *Dies Cinerum*, or *Aſh-Wedneſday*, as an emblem of mortification: For upon this day, in the primitive ages, they uſed to cloath themſelves in *Sack-Cloth*, and ſprinkle *Aſhes* upon their heads; which was the uſual cuſtom of penitents. But notorious ſinners were on this day put to open penance; and that this holy diſcipline was reſettled in its due power and vigour, is the judgment and deſire of our own *Church*, concerning the ſolemn *Quadrageſimal* penances and humiliations: "in the primitive Church (ſays the "preface to the *Commination*) there was a god-"ly diſcipline, that at the beginning of *Lent*, ſuch

Aſh-Wedneſday, *why ſo called.*

The Piety *of the* Primitive Church.

" ſuch perſons as ſtood convicted of notorious " ſin, were put to open penance, and puniſhed " in this World, that their ſouls might be ſav'd " in the day of the Lord; and that others ad- " moniſh'd by their example, might be the " more afraid to offend. Which ſaid diſci- " pline, it is much to be wiſh'd might be re- " ſtor'd again." Now that we may know what the *Church* wiſhes there, it will not be amiſs to ſet down in part, the ſolemnity uſed upon thoſe *Sinners*, at this time; which was order'd thus:

The holy and good Chriſtians of thoſe times, being extreamly careful to keep the honour of their *Religion* unſpotted, and to ſtifle every ſin in its birth, brought offenders to publick ſhame and penalty, to keep them from propagating the malignant influence of a bad example. Now the common and ſtanding penalty they made uſe of, was *Excommunication*, or *Suſpenſion* from communion with the *Church*. For all notorious offenders of what degree ſoever, were immediately cenſur'd and ſeparated from the faithful; who avoided them ſo ſtrictly, that the poor penitents finding no ſhelter nor ſuccour, were forc'd to quit their evil ways, and be glad to ſubmit to the long and ſtrict penances of faſting and mortification; which the Church impoſed on them, as tokens of their ſorrow, and evidences of their reformation: Nay, at laſt they thought themſelves happy, if with prayers and tears they might be admitted to the peace of God, and of his Church again: And this prov'd a happy means to ſave many ſinners; who, if they had been let alone, (as they are in theſe looſer times) would have added ſin to ſin, till they had dropt into everlaſting deſtruction. In thoſe days, the ſuſpended perſons were uſually

Excommunication *in uſe in the* Primitive Church.

Offenders, *in what manner dealt with.*

dealt with after this manner: All notorious ſinners who were to be enjoin'd publick penance, preſented themſelves on this day (tho' 'tis not doubted but publick penance was granted on other ſeaſons likewiſe) before the Church doors to the Biſhop of the place, cloath'd in *Sack-cloth*, and with dejected looks; profeſſing thus by their habit and countenance, their enormous crimes: At which time, the *Deans*, or *Arch-Presbyters* being preſent, (together with the publick *Penitentiary*, who was a kind of *Cenſor Morum*, to enquire into the lives of Chriſtians, to take an account of their failures, and to direct and diſpoſe them to repentance) the penitents were brought into the Church; and the Clergy being preſent, the Biſhop ſung the ſeven *penitential Pſalms*, proſtrate on the ground, with tears, for their abſolution. After which, he laid his hands upon them, (not to abſolve them, but to ratifie their penance) and ſprinkled *Aſhes* upon their heads, and covered them with *Sack-cloth*; and after great lamentations, the cenſure, or ſentence, was paſs'd upon them; whereby they were ſuſpended, not only from the communion of the holy Euchariſt, but from all holy commerce in any (eſpecially publick) duties of religion; and were never re-admitted into Church-ſociety, or to a participation of the ordinances or privileges of Chriſtianity (except in the point of death) till they had exactly fulfill'd the diſcipline of the Church; which principally conſiſted in many ſevere acts of repentance, and mortification, more or leſs, according to the nature of the offence. This term of penance was uſually exacted with great rigour, and ſeldom diſpens'd with; no indulgence or admiſſion being granted, till the full time was compleated. They appear'd, during

The Penitentiar *what.*

The Procedure of the action deſcribed.

this

this time of penance, in all the formalities of ſorrow and mourning, frequently ſtanding without, at the Church-doors, (for they were not ſuffer'd to enter in) and with tears in their eyes, falling down upon their knees to the Miniſters as they went in, and begging the prayers of all good Chriſtians, with all the expreſſions and demonſtrations of a ſorrowful and dejected mind; reckoning the lower they lay in repentance, the higher it would exalt them; and the leſs they ſpar'd themſelves, the more God would ſpare them. The time of penance being expir'd they addreſſed themſelves to the governors of the Church for abſolution: Hereupon, (as an eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian diſcourſes) their repentance was taken into examination; and being found to be ſincere and real, they were openly re-admitted into the Church, by the impoſition of the hands of the Clergy; the parties to be abſolv'd, kneeling down between the knees of the *Biſhop*, (or in his abſence of the *Presbyter*) who laying his hands upon their heads, ſolemnly bleſſed, and abſolv'd them. The *penitents* being thus abſolved, were receiv'd with the univerſal joy and acclamation of the people, as perſons returned from the ſtate of the dead; being embraced by their brethren, who bleſſed God for their return, and wept for the joy of their recovery; who upon their abſolution were now reſtor'd to a participation of the *Lord's Supper*, and to all other acts of *Church-communion*; which by their crimes they had forfeited, and from which they had been ſuſpended, till they had given ſatisfactory evidence of their repentance and purpoſes to perſevere under the exact diſcipline of Chriſtianity.

Penitents, how they behaved themſelves during their ſuſpenſion.

How abſolved.

How received into Communion with the Church.

" Now

" Now, this diſcipline being exercis'd on
" particular offenders, leſt any ſinners ſhould
" paſs unobſerved, and uncenſured; the an-
" cient church thought fit to appoint ſome
" times for general repentance, and eſpecially
" the holy time of *Lent*: And the *Fathers* ad-
" viſe all *Chriſtians*, (even thoſe who were
" not under the cenſures of the Church) to ob-
" ſerve this time of Faſting very ſtrictly, that
" by this voluntary penance and mortification,
" they might ſolemnly teſtify their repentance
" for the whole year, and do that duty out of
" choice, which others were compell'd to per-
" form by the neceſſity of an excommunica-
" tion. Now they thought no time ſo fit for
" this as *Lent*, that by ſpending thoſe days in
" ſorrow and humiliation, they might be bet-
" ter prepared for the holy Sacrament, of
" which all were to partake at [t] *Eaſter*. In
" *Lent* therefore, (in the primitive ages) all
" faſted and repented. And upon this account,
" *Aſh-Wedneſday* was very religiouſly obſerv'd;
" as [u] St. *Auguſtine* plainly teſtifieth, ſaying:
" Therefore the time of *Lent* is holy and con-
" ſecrated; becauſe preſently upon the firſt en-
" trance thereof, we begin by a ſort of judg-
" ing to put a difference beween the juſt
" and the unjuſt; to ſeparate the good from
Aſh-Wedneſday, *the Solemnities uſed thereon.* " the bad. And this pious uſage was continu'd
" long after, which appears by an ancient
" council, wherein we find it is decreed, That
" from and after *Aſh-Wedneſday*, there ſhould
" be no ſuits at law, nor pleas holden; becauſe
" on that *Wedneſday*, call'd the *head of the Faſt*,

[t] In quadrageſimâ triſtitiam habemus, ut in Paſchâ ordine legitimo gaudeamus. *Aug. de Temp.*

[u] *Idem de Temp.*

" all

" all the penitents have hands laid upon them, to
" enjoin them wholly to ſpend this time in re-
" pentance, and the ſervice of God. About
" which time, came out that *Homily* con-
" cerning the *paſtoral care*, written by *Leo* Bi-
" ſhop of *Rome*; wherein, among many good
" rules, this is one: That the prieſt on *Aſh-*
" *Wedneſday* ſhall invite the people to confeſs
" their ſins; and according to the nature of
" their offences, preſcribe them ſuitable penan-
" ces. And how publickly and ſolemnly this
" was perform'd of old, appears by what fol-
" lows. That in King *Edgar*'s canons, which
" appoint, that on *Aſh-Wedneſday*, in the be-
" ginning of *Lent*, every *Biſhop* ſitting in his
" *epiſcopal chair*, all the notorious offenders of
" his *Dioceſe* ſhall come before him; and hav-
" ing confeſs'd their faults, ſhall receive ſuch
" injunctions of penance as their ſin requires.
" After this, on the *Thurſday* before *Eaſter*, they
" ſhall all be gather'd together in the ſame place,
" and the *Biſhop* ſinging ſome hymns over them,
" ſhall give them abſolution, and grant them
" leave to return home. I confeſs, in latter
" ages, during the corruption of the *Roman*
" *Church*, this godly diſcipline degenerated in-
" to a formal and cuſtomary confeſſion upon
" *Aſh-Wedneſday*, uſed by all perſons, to which,
" when the ſubſtance of true repentance was
" gone, they continued the empty ceremo-
" ny of ſprinkling *Aſhes* on the heads of all
" that were preſent, whether penitents or no:
" Which our *Church* hath wholly laid aſide as
" a mere ſhadow; and laments, that the long
" continuance of the *Roman* Male-adminiſtra-
" tion among us in this nation; their formal
" confeſſions; their ſale of indulgences and
" abſolutions; and their cummuting all ſorts of

" penance

" penance for money, &c. had let the people " looſe from all the *primitive* bands of diſci- " pline, which tended to their amendment; " and made them ſo head ſtrong, as they would " never ſince endure that burdenſome, but ſa- " lutary yoke." And ſince this excellent diſcipline is not now practis'd, there is the greater reaſon for all good *Chriſtians* to bewail it; and to admire thoſe bleſſed ages which we cannot exactly imitate; and to wiſh for the reſtoring of ſo profitable an inſtitution.

For the Epiſtle. Joel 2. *from* ℣. 12. *to* 18.

MEDITATIONS FOR ASH-WEDNESDAY.

Goſpel. Matth. 6. *from* ℣. 16. *to* 22.

The prudence of the Church, *in ſetting apart this ſeaſon.*

THough we ought to repent, as well as to pray daily, yet, the *Church* hath in all ages prudently thought fit to ſet apart ſome ſolemn ſeaſon, for the regular and ſincere performance of our *mortification* and *repentance*; and accordingly, hath made choice of the holy time of *Lent*. In the beginning of this ſeaſon, we are to withdraw our minds from all ſenſual pleaſures: We are to get above concern for this world, and fix our deſires and endeavours upon divine and ſpiritual objects; ſubmitting our earthly to our heavenly intereſt, and renouncing the joys and pleaſures of this life, that ſo we may be the better enabled to practiſe thoſe heavenly virtues, which will conduct us to the felicities of the life to come.

What is to be perform'd at this time.

For this (as St. *Chryſoſtom*, [x] in a Sermon he

[x] *Hom.* 1. *in Gen.*

made

made at the entrance of the *Lent-faſt*, repreſents it) is an *heavenly time*; wherein we are to *mortifie* all our vicious inclinations: We are to make new vows, and enter upon Religion, as if we had never done any thing before: We are to mourn for our ſins, and to reſolve againſt them: We are to remember what vows we have already made, and broken; how often we have prevaricated in our duty, and by what temptations we were uſed to fall: And conſequently we are to renounce all affections to ſin, and firmly purpoſe to lead a new life, in all the ſolid and material inſtances of virtue.

And now 'tis to be conſider'd, that if God did not particularly call upon us by theſe religious neceſſities, and ſtop our career in ſin by theſe annual ſolemnities; the ſoul and her intereſt would be very little regarded. For in this corrupt ſtate, whereinto we are ſunk, our nature runs evil-wards, with a very ſtrong and prevailing byaſs; and if God, out of his infinite and inexhauſtible ſpring of goodneſs and mercy, had not appointed ſome holy intervals, wherein to ſubdue our viciated inclinations, and to ſum up all the parts of our repentance; 'tis reaſonable to believe, that by a long and uninterrupted *ſeries* of unmortified luſts, we ſhould gradually deſcend from that perfection of virtue, wherein the heavenly bleſſedneſs conſiſts; and conſequently be liable to the divine indignation among the children of diſobedience. For our eternal happineſs and welfare depends upon our *mortifying* our luſts, ſince God hath ſo ordained, that if we do *mortifie* them we ſhall live, and that if we do not, we ſhall be for ever excommunicated from the regions of light and immortality.

" And

Mortification, *wherein it consists.*

" And indeed *Mortification* (as an excellent " [y] author obſerves) is the one half of Chri- " ſtianity: It is a dying to the world; it is a " denying of the will, and all its natural de- " ſires: An abſtinence from pleaſure, and ſen- " ſual complacencies; that the fleſh being ſub- " dued to the ſpirit, both may join in the ſer- " vice of God, and in the offices of [z] holy Re- " ligion. It conſiſts in actions of ſeverity and " renunciation; it refuſes to give entertainment " to any vanity, nor uſes a freer licenſe in " things lawful, leſt it be tempted to things " unlawful: It kills the luſts of the fleſh, by " taking away its fewel and incentives; and " by uſing to contradict its appetite, does inure " it with more facility to obey the ſuperior " faculties: And, in effect, it is nothing but a " great care we ſin not; and a prudent and " ſevere uſing ſuch remedies and inſtruments, " which in nature and grace are made apt for the " production of our purpoſes." Thus far *Mortification* is abſolutely neceſſary to the being of a *Chriſtian*: For whatſoever is moſt eſteem'd and lov'd in the world, muſt be parted with as a ſnare, if it tempts us from our obedience: And this is nothing but what is moſt juſt and reaſonable. For God having an unalienable propriety in us, we ought therefore to make an entire dedication of our ſelves, and our moſt valuable intereſts to him; and to *mortifie* all thoſe ſinful inclinations of corrupt nature, which diſpoſe to actual impiety: And by ſo doing, an infinite advantage will redound to us; this being in order to our everlaſting happineſs. For

The neceſſity of Mortification.

y *Bp.* Tayl. Gr. Exemp.

z Τῷ ἐπὶ καθαιρέσει τῦ φρονήματος Σαρκὸς πρὸς τὸ ἀσεβέας Σκοπὸν ἐπηνδομένην Ἀποχὴν τῶν ἡδέων. *S. Baſil.*

every

every perſon is ordain'd to a glorious and ſupernatural bleſſedneſs, proportionable to his diſpoſitions and qualifications for it; and till the ſoul is diſintangled from all thoſe unreaſonable paſſions which clog and diſeaſe her, there is no poſſibility of her being aſſociated with the bleſſed *Spirits of juſt men made perfect*. And indeed, could we by an impoſſible ſuppoſition fancy a wicked ſoul aſſumed to thoſe fruitions; ſure its pleaſure would be as little, as its preparation for it was. For pleaſure, which is a relative thing, implies a correſpondence and agreement between the object and the faculty that taſts and enjoys it: And therefore if a man ſhould be plac'd in Heaven, among all the joys with which that bleſſed ſtate abounds; yet, unleſs his mind and temper did ſuit and agree with them, they would be ſo far from delighting him, that they would but reproach his lewd and ſordid degeneracy from the temper of a pure and immortal ſpirit: For what concord can there be between a ſoul, whoſe affections are wedded to the fleſh, and thoſe pure and virgin-ſpirits, that are to live for ever upon wiſdom, and holineſs, and joy, and contemplation? What an infelicity would it be to a ſenſual and malicious ſpirit, to be admitted into the glorious ſociety of heavenly lovers; whoſe whole converſation conſiſts in loving and reloving, and is nothing elſe but a perpetual intercourſe of mutual indearments? Certainly, *Euclid*'s *Elements* would be as agreeable to a *ſwine*, or *metaphyſicks* to a mere ſenſualiſt, as for a carnaliz'd ſoul to be entertain'd with the delights of the heavenly choir, which conſiſt of never-ceaſing *Praiſes* and *Hallelujahs*. Such a ſoul, could never be entertain'd with the *beatifick viſion*; nor find any harmony or muſick in *Hallelujahs*:

How diſagreeable the felicities of Heaven *will be to a* wicked Soul, *conſider'd.*

Hallelujahs: It muſt be forc'd to pine and famiſh amidſt all that plenty of delights, there being not one *viand* in all the heavenly banquet that ſhe could reliſh any ſweetneſs in. But on the contrary, when all our carnal appetites are extinguiſh'd, and our wills and affections are in conjunction with the fountain of purity and bleſſedneſs; we ſhall be diſpos'd to enjoy the pleaſures of Heaven, and our ſouls will be connaturaliz'd to them: So that when we come to take leave of the body, we ſhall fly away into the ſpiritual world, with none but pure and ſpiritual appetites about us; where meeting with an infinite fulneſs of ſpiritual joys and pleaſures, our pre-diſpos'd minds will preſently cloſe in with, and feed upon them with ſuch unſpeakable content and ſatisfaction, as will raviſh them for ever from the thoughts of all other entertainments. And this, I doubt not, was one great reaſon of thoſe extraordinary abſtinences, and corporal auſterities, that were impos'd (at this *ſeaſon*) by the *primitive Church*; that by this means they might gently wean the ſoul from the pleaſures of the body, and teach it beforehand to live upon the delights of ſeparated Spirits: For God hath reduced us to this iſſue, either our ſins, or our ſouls muſt die; either we muſt bid a final adieu to Heaven, or our luſts: So that unleſs we love our ſins ſo well, as to ranſom them with the loſs of our immortal ſouls, it concerns us ſpeedily to ſhake them off by *repentance*, and to *mortifie* our moſt beloved luſts ſince our eternal happineſs and welfare depends upon ſo doing.

Motives to Mortification.

Now 'tis to be conſider'd, that Mortification and corporal auſterities are inſtrumental, and in order to *repentance*; and they no otherwiſe promote remiſſion of ſins, but as they co-operate

Mortification *in order to* Repentance.

rate towards the integrity of our duty. For, as a cypher, which is only in order to a number, ſignifies nothing, unleſs a number be added to it; ſo mortification, which is only in order to *Repentance*, is altogether inſignificant, unleſs it be ſeconded with that great and important duty. *Repentance* is the great *Aſylum* and ſanctuary of humane infirmity; the port of a troubled ſoul, and a plank to a ſhipwreck'd conſcience: 'Tis the miracle of divine goodneſs; the reconciler of the divine attributes, juſtice and mercy; the relief and ſuccour of humane frailty; the envy of Devils, as that which they cannot attain to; and the peculiar and ineſtimable privilege of mankind. This is that particular inſtance of favour, whereby man ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of the Sons of God, as the great favourite of Heaven: For *God ſpar'd not the Angels that ſinned*; whereas man has the advantage of ſecond thoughts: 'Twas man alone, among all rational beings, who had the privilege of being pardon'd by *Repentance* [a]. 'Tis for this reaſon the *Scripture* propounds the goodneſs of God, as the moſt powerful perſuaſive, *to lead men to repentance.* For what more rational argument is there, and more congruous to the nature of man, to work in him a ſerious grief and hearty deteſtation of ſin; than the belief that God, in whoſe power alone it is to pardon ſinners, is moſt deſirous to pardon them, if they will repent and amend? The divine Majeſty interpoſes the moſt ſolemn oath to remove all our ſuſpicions. *As I live, ſaith the Lord, I delight not in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live*, (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) *And*

Repentance, *the nature of it.*

Motives to Repentance.

[a] Μόνος γὰρ ὁ Ἄνθρωπος τῶν λογικῶν ἐξαίρετον ἔχει τὸ συγγνώμης ἐν τῷ μεταγνῶναι ἀξιοῦσθαι. *Nemeſius de Nat. Hom.*

11.) *And have I any pleaſure at all that the wicked ſhould die? ſaith the Lord God: And not that he ſhould return from his ways and live?* (Ezek. xviii. 23.) Here we may obſerve the infinite patience and goodneſs of the Almighty towards his creatures; and his great unwillingneſs to bring ruine and deſtruction upon them. He promiſeth, that if we will caſt away our evil doings, and take up new purpoſes and deſires; if we will change our minds, and our works alſo; *iniquity ſhall not be our ruine.* He ſheweth, that his deſire is not that we ſhould die in them, but turn from them and live: So that he expoſtulates with us, and treats us with the moſt cogent arguments of an endearing and condeſcending love. And now certainly, the conſideration of this is everlaſtingly pregnant of encouragements to repentance: For if our heavenly Father, who hath been ſo infinitely offended, and ſo highly provoked by us, be ſo ready, ſo forward to receive us; and there be no hindrance, no difficulty, no diſcouragement on his part; is it poſſible, after all this, that we can be ſuch enemies to our ſelves, as not to improve the capacity of being eternally happy? Is it poſſible we ſhould be ſo beſotted, as to exchange the pleaſures of an immortal Heaven, for thoſe of an intemperate draught? To ſell the joys of Angels, for the embraces of an harlot; or pawn our part in paradiſe, for a little money; for which, e're long, we ſhall have no other uſe, but only to purchaſe ſix foot of earth, and a winding-ſheet? Can we ſo far lay aſide our reaſon, (which ought to be the moderator of our actions) as to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſhort momentary ſeaſon, and thereby extinguiſh all our hopes of being pleas'd for ever? Come, let us not

Concluſion.

trifle

trifle in a matter of ſuch vaſt importance: Let us have pity upon our ſelves, and our immortal ſouls; and take due care to prevent that which is to be dreaded above all things, the being miſerable for ever. Let us repent now, this very day, (*Heb.* viii. 7.) for this is our day of ſalvation: (2 *Cor.* vi. 2.) and if we ſlip it, and let this day paſs, 'tis probable we ſhall never have another [b]. Let us make up our accounts as frequently as we can, that our repentance may in ſome meaſure keep pace with the errors and failings of our lives; and that we may not be oppreſs'd and confounded with the inſupportable weight of the ſins of a whole life, falling upon us at once; and that perhaps at the very worſt time, when we are ſick and weak, and have neither underſtanding nor leiſure to recollect our ſelves, and to call our ſins diſtinctly to remembrance; much leſs, to exerciſe any fit and proper acts of repentance for them. The good Lord therefore grant, that theſe conſiderations may move us to begin our repentance this day; and to ſpend this holy ſeaſon in mortification, and amending our lives: So that we becoming true penitents, we may at laſt be made partakers of everlaſting glory.

The PRAYER.

O *Eternal judge of men and Angels! Father of mercy, and the great lover of ſouls! Look down, I beſeech thee, upon me, vile and ſinful duſt and aſhes, who am ſo confounded with the ſenſe of my ſin, and of thy juſt diſpleaſure a-*

[b] Cognoſco quòd indulgentiam Deus promiſit tibi, craſtinum autem diem quis promiſit? *Aug. Verb. Dom.*

gainſt me, that I tremble to come into thy preſence; and yet I dare not ſtay from thee. I acknowledge my ſelf unworthy, infinitely unworthy! to take thy ſacred name into my ſinful mouth, having ſinned moſt grievouſly againſt thee: I have renounced the God of my being, and the fountain of all mercies: I have mock'd and abus'd the patience and long-ſuffering of ſo good a God; ſo gracious a Father; ſo infinite a power; ſo glorious a majeſty; ſo bountiful a patron, and ſo mighty a redeemer; that my ſins are grown ſo great that I cannot look up, and the confuſion of my face hath cover'd me! And now what ſhall I ſay to thee? O thou judge of all the world! I am guilty: I am guilty! and have nothing to plead for my ſelf but the blood of Jeſus; *that all-ſufficient propitiation for the ſins of the whole world. O Lord! I do earneſtly repent, and am heartily ſorry for theſe my miſdoings: The remembrance of them is grievous unto me; the burthen of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon me, have mercy upon me, moſt merciful Father! and for* Jeſus Chriſt *his ſake, forgive me all that is paſt; and grant, that the ſenſe of theſe my miſcarriages, may render me more careful and vigilant for the future. Thou haſt promiſed, O Lord! to receive returning ſinners; to blot out their iniquities; and to heal their backſlidings: I deſire, O merciful God! to return to thee; I hate and renounce my ſelf, and do here abhor my ſelf in duſt and aſhes before thee. Wherefore, for thy compaſſion's ſake, refuſe not thy returning ſon: I have prodigally waſted my talents; and ſpent my time in ſin and vanity; but I have not loſt my title and relation to thee my Father. O my God! give me the ſorrow of an humble penitent; the purpoſes of a converted ſinner; the love of a pardon'd perſon; the zeal of an oblig'd and redeem'd priſoner; the*

hope

hope of one that feels thy preſent goodneſs, and longs for more: That I, being reſcued from the poſſeſſion of the Devil, and the torments of periſhing ſouls; may be admitted into thy kingdom of glory, there to ſing Hallelujahs to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, for ever and ever. Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty and everlaſting God; who hateſt nothing that thou haſt made, and doſt forgive the ſins of all them that are penitent: Create, and make in me, a new and contrite heart, that I worthily lamenting my ſins, and acknowledging my wretchedneſs, may obtain of thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remiſſion and forgiveneſs, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſal. *prop.* 51, 69.

Evening. 44, 49.

The Solemn Fast of Lent.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Gen. 19, *to* ℣. 30. 2 Mat. 4. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Gen. 22. 2. 2 Cor. 7.

LENT, (which is the old *Saxon* appellative of the ſpring) is a time of extraordinary humiliation; and accordingly hath been obſerv'd in the Chriſtian Church, with the greateſt ſolemnity. It is a ſeaſon, wherein we are to prepare for the great and joyful feſtival of our Saviour's reſurrection; and is therefore call'd by St. *Clement* ἡ νηστεία τῦ πάσχα, the *Paſchal Faſt*.

The antiquity of the Lent, *or* Spring-Faſt.

The obſervation of this time of *Lent*, is ſo ancient, that there is no beginning to be found of it; which hath caus'd many perſons to believe it was of Apoſtolical inſtitution, and that perhaps not without reaſon. For no Church can be found, wherein a ſolemn Faſt before *Eaſter* was not obſerv'd; which is a conſiderable argument to prove it deriv'd it ſelf from ſuch a beginning as I have mention'd: For otherwiſe it cannot be conceiv'd how it ſhould prevail univerſally in all countries, where the name of *Chriſt* was preach'd.

Why limited to forty Days.

As for the limitation of this ſolemn ſeaſon of humiliation to the number of forty days; therein, I ſuppoſe, the Church had a reſpect to *Chriſt*'s faſting *forty days*, in the dedication of the new Covenant, as *Moſes* and *Elias* had done in the giving and reſtoring the old. Moreover, this is a number likewiſe remarkable in Scripture, upon many other accounts: For the rain which made the flood, continued *forty days*; and ſo many days the ſpies

ſpent

ſpent in ſearching out the good land; and *Ezekiel*, in the type he was order'd to draw of the ſiege of *Jeruſalem*, lay on his right ſide, to *bear the iniquity of the houſe of Judah forty days*: after which number of days alſo, *Jonah* threatned *Nineveh* ſhould be deſtroyed; and ſo many our Saviour ſtaid with his Diſciples after his reſurrection, before he aſcended into Heaven. This *Quadrageſimal* Faſt was kept by the primitive Chriſtians with great piety and religion: They abſtain'd from all ſorts of fleſh and wine; ſome liv'd the whole ſeaſon upon bread and roots, being particularly careful not to indulge themſelves the beſt fare of any ſort whatever, but contenting themſelves with the meaneſt, which they us'd alſo with moderation. And to the end that the obſervation of it might be moſt grave and ſolemn, (ſays a judicious writer) there were Laws enacted, That during the time of Lent, all proceſs and inquiry into criminal actions ſhould be ſuſpended, and no corporal puniſhments inflicted upon any, it being unfit that in the holy time of Lent, the body ſhould ſuffer puniſhment, while the Soul is expecting Abſolution. But with what care ſoever they kept the preceeding parts, 'tis certain they kept the cloſe of it with a mighty ſtrictneſs and auſterity: I mean the laſt week of it, that which immediately preceeded the feaſt of *Eaſter*: This they conſecrated to more peculiar acts of prayer, abſtinence, and devotion. It was ſtyled the *Paſſion Week*, the Week of Faſting, dry diet, and penances: (in which, the devouter ſort did eat nothing but bread and ſalt, and drank nothing but water) In this *Week*, tribunals, and courts of judicature were ſhut up, no pleadings, no ſuits of law, no publick buſineſs, no execution allowed, nothing but preparation for the

The manner of its Obſervation.

Hebdomada Magna, *why ſo called.*

approaching ſolemnity of *Eaſter*. This was the *Hebdomada magna*, the *Great* (or Holy) *Week*: ſo called (ſays *Chryſoſtom*) not becauſe the days were longer than ordinary, but the bleſſings were more ſublime and incomprehenſible! becauſe of the great and ſtupendious benefits which God (this Week) conferr'd upon the world, by the death and reſurrection of the ever-bleſſed *Jeſus*. This is the *Week*, in which truly great and ineffable good things were purchas'd for us: Death was conquer'd; the curſe deſtroyed; the Devil's tyranny diſſolv'd; his inſtruments broken, Heaven open'd; Angels rejoiced: the partition-wall broken down; and God and Man reconciled. Juſtly therefore may we call it the *Great Week*; and juſtly ought we to ſpend this ſeaſon in prayers, faſtings, and mortifications. And now ſince the Church keeps her *Quadrageſimal* ſolemnities, in imitation of our Saviour's *Faſting forty Days*, it will not be unſeaſonable to conſider the circumſtances thereof.

The Faſting *and* Temptation *of* CHRIST.

As ſoon as the holy *Jeſus* was baptized, he was by the impulſe of the holy Spirit, driven into the Deſart of *Judæa*, (about four miles from the place of his baptiſm) *to be tempted of the Devil*. There he remain'd *forty days and forty nights*, in a continued faſt; being in the midſt of wild beaſts, attended with all the miſeries of ſolitude and watchings; and perpetually aſſaulted with the inward temptations and ſuggeſtions of the ſpirits of darkneſs. At the expiration of which time, the holy *Jeſus* being hungry, *Satan* aſſum'd a bodily and viſible ſhape, and vigorouſly ſet upon him with a three-fold temptation. Firſt, he perſuaded him to break his faſt, upon the expence of a miracle, by *making the Stones become Bread*; (Matth. iv. 3.) which would at once, both refreſh his humanity

The Devil's *firſt* Temptation.

nity, and prove his Divinity. But the holy *Jeſus* refuſed to be relieved, and denied to manifeſt the Divinity of his Perſon, rather than he would do an act which had in it the intimation of a diffident ſpirit, or might be expounded a diſreputation to *God*'s providence: And therefore he immediately anſwer'd him, and ſaid, *It is written, Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God: (ver. 4.)* Intimating, that *bread* was not the only ſupport of man's life; but the providence of *God*, which continually attended the obſervers of his word. But the tempter perceiving *Jeſus* to be a perſon of greater eminency and perfection, than to be mov'd by ſenſual and low deſires, enter'd upon another experiment: He firſt took him up and ſet him upon the higheſt part of the magnificent Temple of *Jeruſalem*; and then requir'd a demonſtration of his being the Son of *God*: ſaying, *If thou be the Son of* God, *caſt thy ſelf down; For it is written, He ſhall give his Angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up, leſt at any time thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone. (ver. 6.)* But *Jeſus* underſtood it well; and tho' he was ſecure of *God*'s protection, yet he would not tempt *God* to an unneceſſary conſervation: and therefore ſaid unto him, *It is written again, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God. (ver. 7.)* The Devil thus finding himſelf twice defeated, at laſt unites all his power of ſtratagem, and accordingly carried the holy *Jeſus* to the top of an *exceeding high mountain, and ſhews him all the Kingdoms of the world and the glory of them*; and poſſibly by an angelical power, draws into one centre the ſpecies and idea's of all the kingdoms and glories of the world; and makes an admirable map

His Second.

His Third.

map of beauties, and presents it to the eyes of *Jesus*: And then he told him, That those things (with all their pomp and splendour) were at his own disposal; and should be given to him, *if he would fall down and worship him.* (*ver.* 9.) The care of God's glory had so fill'd and employ'd the faculties of the holy *Jesus*, that he takes no notice of the offer; but on the contrary, was highly provok'd at his unparallel'd boldness and blasphemy: and therefore peremptorily commanded him to depart from him, saying, *Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* (*ver.* 10.) Whereupon the Devil left him, and the *Angels came and ministred unto him,* (*ver.* 11.) refreshing him after this triumphant combat, wherein he had illustriously bruis'd the Serpent's head, and consign'd to his Church the doctrine and discipline of *Fasting*, in order to the resisting and conquering all the temptations of the Devil.

He is Overcome.

Epistle. 2 Cor. 6 from Verse 1, 11.

MEDITATIONS For The Holy Time of LENT.

Gospel. Mat. 4. from Verse 1, to 12.

AMONG those Humiliations, wherewith penitent sinners ought to prostrate themselves before God, to sue for mercy; every person must observe, that *Fasting* hath been frequently mentioned, as holding a principal place: And therefore, I think it very seasonable, to consider a little of it at present, the Church having set apart this solemn season for that purpose. *Fasting*, (says St. *Athanasius* lib. de Virg.) is the

the *Life of Angels*: not only becauſe during the time we can live without meat and drink, we imitate their happy life, and are (as he ſpeaks) of their Order, and plac'd in their rank; but becauſe it clarifies the mind, and gives it both ability and leiſure, to withdraw it ſelf from all terreſtrial Objects, and raiſe its thoughts to the glories of an immortal Crown. *Faſting* is one of the beſt ſhields to quench the *fiery darts of the Devil*; and the foundation of many other virtues: For if we obſerve all our vanities, we ſhall find, that upon a ſudden joy, or a proſperous accident, or an opulent fortune, or a pampered body, we are apt to be light and inconſiderate, proud and impatient, luſtful and revengeful: Whereas, *Faſting* is one of thoſe inflictions which reduces our body to want; our ſpirits to ſoberneſs; our deſires to abſtinence, and cuſtoms of ſelf-denial: and ſo by taking off the inundations of ſenſuality, leaves the enemies within, in a condition of being more eaſily overcome. And therefore, St. *Paul kept his body under*; uſing ſeverities to it for the taming its rebellions and diſtemperatures. " There is a ſtory of a religious *Virgin*, " who ſeeing a young Man much tranſported " with the love of her; and that he inceſſantly " importun'd her with all the violent purſuits " that paſſion could ſuggeſt: told him, that ſhe " had made a Vow to faſt forty days with bread " and water, of which ſhe muſt diſcharge her " ſelf, before ſhe could think of correſponding " to any other deſire; and perſuaded him, " as a teſtimony of his affection, that he alſo " would be a party in the ſame Vow. The " young Man undertook it, that he might give " probation of his love: but becauſe he had " been us'd to a delicate and nice kind of life, in twenty

Faſting, the Nature thereof.

The Obligations we have to faſt.

" twenty days he was ſo weaken'd, that he " thought more of death than love; and ſo got " a cure for his intemperance, and was wittily " cozen'd into a remedy." It is indeed a very hard thing for a Man at once to bid adieu to all his darling luſts, and their appendant pleaſures: This, as our Saviour deſcribes it, is like the *cutting off a right hand*, and the *pulling out of a right eye*; and therefore, muſt doubtleſs be attended with vehement ſtruglings and reluctancies. But when by *Faſting* and Abſtinence, we have broken the main ſtrength of our luſts, and by conſtant and ſevere reſtraint, for a while kept under all our evil habits; they will by degrees decay and languiſh, and at laſt expire: and then the trouble of contending will be over; our religion will be delightſome and eaſie; and we ſhall reap far more pleaſure and ſatisfaction from it, than ever we did from the moſt headſtrong courſe of ſinning. And how can we think much of ſpending this ſolemn ſeaſon in *Faſting*, and the retirements of religion? The experience whereof will create a conſtant harmony within us; will crown us with the applauſe of our own conſciences; will endear us to the fountain of all love and goodneſs; and entertain us with the hopes of being as happy in a ſhort time, as all the joys of a glorious immortality can make us. Who would not deny himſelf the pleaſure of a moment, in full aſſurance of being pleaſed for ever; and of being millions of ages hence, rejoicing among Angels, and the bleſſed *Spirits of juſt Men made perfect?* So that we may eaſily perceive, that *Faſting* and Abſtinence is very helpful and ſubſervient to the ends of religion. For, God Almighty affects not to burthen us with unneceſſary impoſitions; all that he requires of us, is what our intereſt requires: His

The Ends and Uſes of religious Faſting.

deſigns

deſigns, in all his Diſpenſations towards us are, only to educate and train up our nature for Heaven; to diſcipline and exerciſe it in the preparatory acts of the heavenly life; that ſo, when 'tis advanc'd from the ſchool of probation to the fulneſs of joy, it may be naturaliz'd to the exerciſe of it.

Faſting, *an excellent Remedy againſt* Temptation.

But it is farther to be conſider'd, that *Faſting* and Abſtinence are excellent remedies againſt the temptations of Satan. The Devil firſt conſiders the conſtitution and temper of the perſon he is to tempt; and where he finds his inclination apt for a vice, he preſents him with objects, and opportunities, and arguments fitting to his frail diſpoſition; till his deluded ſoul yields up its reſolutions, and loſes its purity, and runs into the embraces of the accurſed evil. Now in this caſe, we muſt diligently obſerve our own weakneſſes, and by *Faſting*, and ſpecial acts of mortification, fortifie that part where we are apt to be expoſed to danger. We may be ſure that ſubtil tempter, who hath been ſo many thouſand years ſtudying the arts of ſeducing us, will not fail to aſſault us where he is ſureſt of ſucceſs: And therefore it behoves us to fortifie our ſelves where we have ſo much reaſon to expect the enemy will aſſault us; and to rectify our opinions of, and mortifie our affections to thoſe things, which have already ſo much impos'd upon our virtue and innocence. Beſides which, let us heartily call upon our heavenly Father, who has promiſed to come in with his aſſiſtance, whenſoever we ſhall need and ask it. He can baffle the crafts of the Devil, by his infinite wiſdom; and his aſſaults, by his omnipotent power: So that there is no temptation which we may not repulſe, when our endeavours are thus ſeconded with aids from above. Tho' we be encompaſs'd with many and potent enemies, who

Temptations *to Sin, how conquer'd.*

who make it their buſineſs to tempt, and to deter us from our duty; yet our caſe is not ſo difficult, ſo long as we have a greater ſtrength on our ſide. Tho' there are legions of Devils, who are continually deſigning and working our ruine; there are alſo myriads of bleſſed Angels, who are more chearful and officious to do us good. So that they who apply themſelves to the buſineſs of religion, and yield themſelves tractable to good motions, will find the holy Spirit of God more ready and active to encourage, than the Devil can be to pull them back; if we do not by our own careleſneſs and infidelity, diſengage the almighty Spirit from aſſiſting us.

The Pleaſures of Virtue.

And now, let virtue and vice, a religious and a wicked courſe of life be compar'd; and let any conſidering perſon judge of the inequality. When a man hath once engag'd himſelf in a religious courſe, and is accuſtom'd to piety and holineſs, he will diſcover that peace and ſatisfaction, thoſe ſolid and ſubſtantial joys, as are only to be found in the ways of religion and virtue. For what greater contentment and ſatisfaction can there be to the mind of man, when it is once purify'd and refin'd from the dregs of ſenſual pleaſures and delights, than to contemplate and admire the infinite excellencies, and tranſcendent perfections of its great creator? How can the thoughts of God be unentertaining to that Man, who has made it his buſineſs to *live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly* in the world? The conſideration of the divine attributes is his recreation and delight: becauſe he is freed from the anxities of guilt, and the fears of a future Judgment. And what peace and joy muſt it needs be, to apprehend (upon good grounds) that God is reconciled to us, and become our friend; that all our ſins are cancell'd, and ſhall never

never more be remembred againſt us? What inexpreſſible comfort does overflow the pious and devout ſoul, from the remembrance of a holy and well-ſpent life, and a conſciouſneſs of its own innocency and integrity? *A good Man* (ſaith *Soloman*) *is ſatisfied from himſelf*: "He hath the "pleaſure of being wiſe, and acting reaſonably; "the pleaſure of being juſtified to himſelf in "what he doth, and of being acquitted by the "ſentence of his own mind. There is a great "pleaſure in being innocent, becauſe that pre-"vents guilt and trouble: It is pleaſant to be "virtuous and good, becauſe that is to excel "many others; and it is pleaſant to grow bet-"ter, becauſe that is to excel our ſelves: Nay, "it is pleaſant even to mortifie and ſubdue our "luſts, becauſe that is victory. It is pleaſant to "command our appetites and paſſions, and to "keep them in due order, within the bounds of "reaſon and religion, becauſe this is a kind of "Empire, this is to govern. It is naturally "pleaſant to rule and to have power over others; "but he is the great and abſolute Monarch who "commands himſelf. This is the *Kingdom of* "*God within us*; a Dominion infinitely to "be preferr'd before all the *Kingdoms of this* "*World and the glory of them.*" He then that lives a holy and virtuous life, is the truly happy man; for his religion furniſhes him with all the true cauſes of peace and tranquillity of mind. He does his duty with great pleaſure and ſatisfaction, but he reflects upon it with ſtill greater: His preſent joys are entertaining, but his after-comforts are much more ſo: Yet of all the reviews which ſuch an one takes of his life, none yields him ſo much comfort and ſatisfaction, as that which he takes of it, when he comes to die. "For, what an unſpeakable

" ſpeakable ſatisfaction will it be to a dying
" man, when, if he looks backward, he ſees a
" life well-ſpent; if forward, he has before him
" a bright proſpect of light and glory? When
" he can ſay with the great *Apoſtle*, *I have*
" *fought a good fight*; *I have finiſh'd my courſe*;
" *I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid*
" *up for me a crown of righteouſneſs, which the*
" *Lord, the righteous Judge, ſhall give me at that*
" *day.* I ſay, it muſt needs be an unſpeakable,
" and unconceivable ſatisfaction, for a man in
" his laſt hour, when he is taking leave of his
" body, and ſhaking hands with the whole
" world; when all are ſad about him, and con-
" cerned for him; to conſider there is a better
" ſtate, and that he has a title to it; that when
" his *earthly tabernacle ſhall be diſſolv'd, he has*
" *a building with God, an houſe not made with*
" *hands, eternal in the Heavens.* That when
" he ſhall ceaſe to live with men he ſhall dwell
" with God, and converſe with Angels: In a
" word, that he is to leave nothing but vani-
" ties and ſhadows behind him; and that he
" has the ſolid and real happineſs of a whole
" eternity before him. What a mild and un-
" terrifying thing is death to ſuch a man as
" this? And with what ſerenity and chearful-
" neſs does he entertain its ſummons? He can
" ſmile in his Phyſician's face, when he hears
" him pronounce his ſickneſs deſperate; can
" receive the ſentence of death without tremb-
" ling; and if his ſenſes hold out ſo long, can
" hear even his paſſing-bell without diſturbance.
" For now he feels the approaches of that
" ſalvation with joy, which before he had
" wrought out *with fear and trembling*: And
" can lay down his body with an holy hope,
" having *poſſeſs'd it in ſanctification and honour.*

" And

" And what a happy ſtate of mind is this! How " far exceeding all the common objects of de- " ſire and envy, and all thoſe pleaſures of ſin, " for whoſe ſake 'tis yet frequently put to the " hazard, and too often *fooliſhly exchang'd?* To " live with peace of conſcience, is a ſingular " happineſs; but much more to die with it: " Then 'tis a *peace that paſſes all underſtanding.* " So great reaſon had *Balaam* for that paſſio- " nate wiſh of his: *Let me die the death of the* " *righteous, and let my latter end be like his.*

As for the ungodly, it is not ſo with them: For there is nothing more demonſtrable than the miſery of a wicked man; his guilt lies in wait for him, and creates perpetual diſcontent to his own mind. O the torments of a guilty conſcience! which the ſinner feels more or leſs all his life long; but eſpecially at the hour of his death. How does the guilt of his wicked life then ſtare him in the face? What ſtorms and Tempeſts are rais'd in his ſoul, when eternity preſents it ſelf to his imagination! and he finds himſelf ſinking into the regions of darkneſs, and is every moment in a fearful expectation of meeting with the juſt reward of his deeds? Who can expreſs the confuſion he then feels? For a man to recollect he is juſt going to give an account before *God*, of an unprofitable wicked life; to think he has *neglected ſo great ſalvation*, and that he muſt now ſpend a long eternity in unconceivable miſery: With what regret will he then remember the ſins of his life? And how full of rage and indignation will he be againſt himſelf, for having neglected to know the *things that belong to his peace*; and which, are now, likely to be for ever, hid from his eyes. *The miſeries of Vice.*

To conclude: Since to die well, is the laſt act of our Chriſtian warfare; it muſt needs Concluſion.

highly concern us, ſo to live while we ſojourn in this world, that we may come off victoriouſly at that great and important hour. Let us then be careful to lay in a large ſtock of ſpiritual preparation, that whenſoever it happens we may not be ſurpriz'd. Let us not be led away with noiſe and popularity; nor be frighted from our duty by the cenſures of ſcornful and prophane perſons: But let us ſpend this holy time of *Lent*, in acquiring a ſtrong and lively faith; a mind well furniſh'd with divine conſiderations; a ſincere and hearty repentance; an unreſtrain'd charity; a confirm'd patience; a profound ſubmiſſion to the will of *God*, and a well-grounded hope of a bleſſed eternity: That coming with theſe preparations unto *Eaſter-day*, we may partake of the bleſſings of the ſeaſon, a joyful reſurrection.

The PRAYER.

O *Holy and eternal* Jeſus! *who for our ſakes didſt faſt forty days and forty nights; and by whoſe holy example, this ſeaſon has been ſet apart for a ſolemn time of faſting, prayer, and repentance: In mercy look down upon me, thy ſervant; and make me ſo deeply ſenſible of thy love to penitent ſinners, that neither this, nor any o-their opportunity of repentance may be loſt upon me. Thou, O God! knoweſt the infirmities of my nature; with what difficulties my corrupt inclinations are overcome; and how apt I am to cheriſh and indulge my ſelf in all manner of impieties: Do thou, therefore, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, give me ſuch a ſenſe of my frailties and corruptions, and ſuch aſſiſtances of thy divine grace, as may enable me to reſiſt all the temptations of the world, the fleſh,*

fleſh, and the Devil. O give me a reſolution ſo ſtrong; a repentance ſo univerſal; a ſorrow ſo deep; a hope ſo pure; a charity ſo ſublime: that no temptation may be able in any circumſtance to ſeduce me from my duty to thee. Let me never, O Lord! lie down in ſin, nor riſe in ſhame: but let me be partaker both of the death and reſurrection of the bleſſed Jeſus: *And grant, that from this very moment, I may be indefatigable in thy ſervice; and that I may never more liſten to the whiſpers of ſin: but let thy goodneſs and compaſſion bring me, and all ſinners, to repentance; and thy mercies give us pardon, and thy holy ſpirit give us perſeverance; and thine infinite favour bring us to everlaſting glory: thro' the merits and interceſſion of our bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus. *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

O Lord! who for our ſakes, didſt faſt forty days, and forty nights; give me grace to uſe ſuch abſtinence, that my fleſh being ſubdued to the ſpirit, I may ever obey thy godly motions in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, to thy honour and glory, who liveſt and reigneſt with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm *Proper.* 44, 45, 46. *Evening.* 47, 48, 49.

PALM-SUNDAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Exod.* 9. 2 *Mat.* 26. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. *Exod.* 10. 2. *Heb.* 5. to ℣. 11.

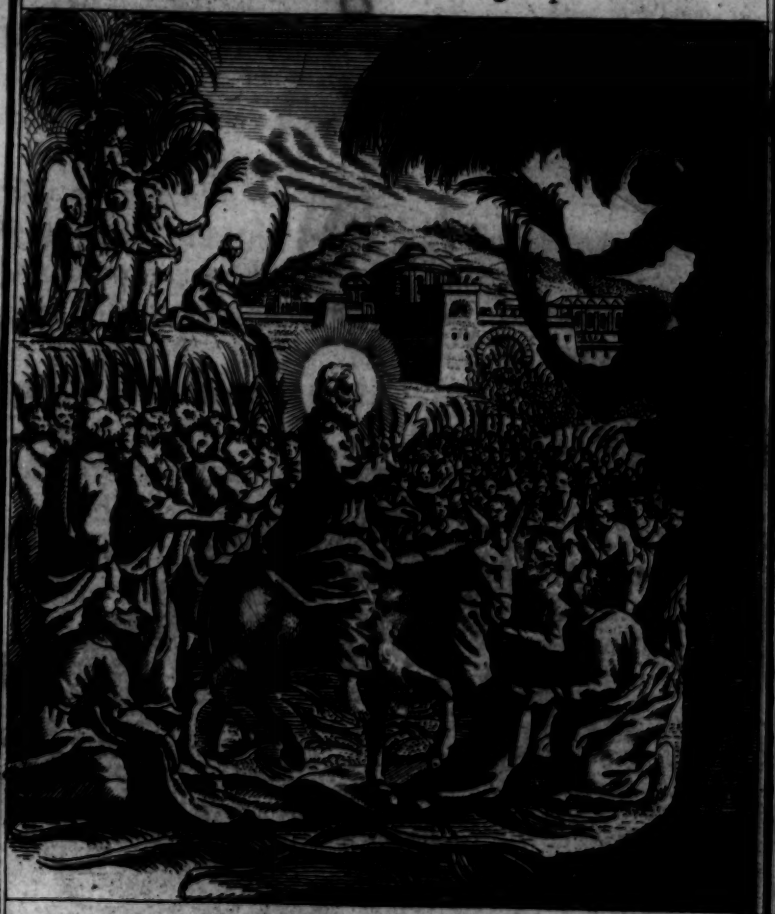
ON this Day, (which begins the holy week) our bleſſed Saviour, being determined to fulfill all that was ſpoken of him in the law, and the Prophets; took his journey to *Jeruſalem*. We read he came to a place call'd *Bethphage*, upon mount *Olivet*; (which is near a mile from *Jeruſalem*) from whence he ſent two of his Apoſtles, (who were in all probability *Peter* and *John*) to a Village not far diſtant from that place, and ſaid unto them: *Go unto the Village over-againſt you, and ſtraightway ye ſhall find an Aſs tied, and a Colt with her: looſe them, and bring them unto me. And if any Man ſay ought unto you! ye ſhall ſay, the* Lord *hath need of them; and ſtraightway he will ſend them.* (Matth. xxi. 2, 3.) The Apoſtles obeyed this order; and finding every thing as their great Maſter had foretold, they brought the Aſs and Colt to him, and *Jeſus* being ſet thereon, and attended with the congratulations of the people, he proceeded in his journey, and arrived at *Jeruſalem*; accompliſhing thereby that prophecy of *Zachary*, *Fear not Daughter of Sion, behold thy King cometh, full of meekneſs, ſitting upon an Aſs's Colt.* In the mean time, the people who were come to *Jeruſalem*, at the feaſt of the paſſover, having received information of the reſurrection of *Lazarus*, from thoſe that were eye-witneſſes of the miracle, and having notice of the

Jeſus *rides to* Jeruſalem.

His entrance into that City.

St. Matthew Chap. XXI.

Christ enters Jerusalem sitting upon an Ass.



St. Matthew 21. Verse 8.

And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way, others cut down branches from the trees and strawed them in the way.


BRITISH MUSEUM

the approach of *Jeſus*, they came running in mighty throngs to meet him, with branches of Palm-trees in their hands, (emphatical emblems of his meekneſs and his Triumphs) crying out, *Hoſannah!* (which ſignifies honour or adoration) *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. And a very great multitude ſpread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches from the trees, and ſtrewed them in the way:* hereby giving him thoſe honours that were us'd only in the triumphs of Kings and Emperors. When he was arriv'd at the deſcent of mount *Oliret*, his Diſciples being tranſported with joy, to ſee their Maſter ſo highly honoured, immediately broke out into raptures of thankſgiving, and loud doxologies to God, for all the mighty works which they had ſeen. At which time all the people, as well *thoſe who went before*, as thoſe *who follow'd after*, join'd with the Diſciples in their triumphant acclamations: ſo that the holy *Jeſus* was ſurrounded with the moſt magnificent applauſes: for they continued to chant forth, *Hoſannah, to the Son of David: Bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hoſannah in the higheſt.*

He is uſher'd in with acclamations.

Theſe applauſes and acclamations of the people exceedingly enrag'd the *Phariſees*; for they could not, without great Indignation, ſee ſuch extraordinary honours ſhew'd to one whoſe death they had reſolv'd upon: And therefore they argued thus among themſelves, *Do ye not perceive, that we prevail nothing? Behold, all the world is gone after him!* Yet others of them could not ſo mildly expreſs their envy and diſpleaſure; but with ſome ſeeming complaiſance deſir'd *Jeſus* to command the ſilence of his Diſciples. But he ſoon replied, *I tell you, that if theſe ſhould hold their peace, the Stones would immediately cry out.*

Which enraged the Phariſees.

(Luke xix. 40.) And when our Saviour drew near to *Jeruſalem*, and had a full view of that glorious City and Temple, *he wept over it*: the joy of his triumph could not hinder him from ſhedding tears, at the proſpect of thoſe miſeries and infelicities, which would ſoon come upon that unhappy City; as a puniſhment for that *Deicide*, which ſhe was ready to commit. Whereupon, he cried out: *O that thou hadſt known, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy Peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days ſhall come upon thee, that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide. And ſhall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee: and they ſhall not leave in thee one Stone upon another; becauſe thou knew'ſt not the time of thy viſitation.* (Luke xix. 42, 43, 44.) By which, he ſhew'd himſelf more affected with the ruine of *Jeruſalem*, than the acclamations of the people. But having enter'd the City with a vaſt concourſe of people, all the citizens were mov'd with an extraordinary curioſity, to know *who it was?* The multitude made anſwer, that *it was* Jeſus, *the great prophet of* Nazareth *of* Galilee.

Jeſus *wept over* Jeruſalem.

Our Saviour at his arrival, (inſtead of going up to the palace of the *High-Prieſt*, or to the court of the *Roman Governor*) went immediately into the Temple of God; where ſeeing that holy place profan'd and diſhonour'd by trading and merchandiſe, he was mov'd with indignation; and *caſt out all them that ſold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the ſeats of them that ſold doves.* And to ſatisfie them of the reaſonableneſs of this action, he ſaid unto them: *It is written, my houſe ſhall be call'd the houſe of prayer, but*

He clears the Temple *of* traders.

but ye have made it a den of thieves. At the ſame time, came the blind and the lame to him, and he miraculouſly manifeſted his authority and power, by curing them all. But when the *chief Prieſts* and *Scribes* ſaw thoſe ſtupendious things, and perceived the unanimous acclamations of little children, who harmoniouſly join'd in *chorus*, to ſing *Hoſannah to the Son of David*; they were much diſpleas'd; and could not vent their paſſion, but by asking the holy *Jeſus*, if he regarded what theſe children ſaid? But he ſilenc'd them, by ſhewing, that what was ſo highly diſpleaſing to them, did really fulfill the *Scriptures.* For, *have you never read* (ſaith he) *theſe words of the* Pſalmiſt, *Out of the mouth of babes and ſucklings, thou haſt perfected praiſe?* After which, our Saviour left them, and went out of the City into *Bethany*, and lodged there.

Palm-Sunday, *why ſo called.*

This day is called *Palm-Sunday:* It had its original from the branches of *Palms* which the *Jews* ſtrew'd under his Feet, at his kingly and triumphant entrance into *Jeruſalem.* Among the *Greeks*, 'tis called, Κυριακὴ τῶν Βαΐων· and among the *Latines*, *Dominica Palmarum, Florum, atque Ramorum.* The tranſactions of this day were ſo obſervable, (as a modern writer relates) that the *Latin* Church of the latter ages turn'd this, as well as the other Feſtivals, into pageantry; dreſſing up a repreſentative Saviour, and carrying *Palms* before him, as if they welcom'd him into *Jeruſalem.* And in the *Greek* Church, they make up branches of *Olives*, and *Palms*, into diverſe forms; by which they keep up the memory of the feaſt: The *Emperor* and the *Patriarch*, (when that Empire was in its glory) uſing to give at this time great largeſſes to the common people, which from the day is

called *Palms*. And now in *Muſcovy* the *Patriarch* rides in ſtate, like our Saviour, and is met by the *Grand-Duke*, and all the people, who repreſent the *Jews*, entertaining him. "But "in [c] St. *Chryſoſtom*'s time, the *Greeks* were "better taught; for then the whole Chriſtian "Church had their proceſſions, and went out "to meet their Saviour; not deck'd with "Palms, but adorn'd with love and charity, "and other chriſtian virtues: With faſtings "and tears, prayers and watchings; and with "the moſt profound veneration for their bleſſed "Redeemer.

Epiſtle. Phil. 2. *from* ℣. 5. *to* 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR PALM-SUNDAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 27. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 55.

WHEN the holy and eternal *Jeſus* made his publick appearance in the world, every thing in him was excellent and extraordinary! The lineaments of his face were ſo beautiful, that he was juſtly ſtyled, *the faireſt of the children of men*: But the diſpoſitions of his Soul were ſuch, that the moſt illuſtrious inſtances of piety and ſanctity, that could be obſerved either in Angels or men, were but a faint repreſentation of his more perfect pattern. The charms of his countenance were moſt invincible; the eloquence and reaſon of his diſcourſes moſt perſuaſive: But the holineſs of his life and converſation, excell'd them all. In ſhort, ſo great was his perfection; ſo exact the conformity of

The Accompliſhments *of the holy* Jeſus.

[c] Chryſoſtom, *Tom.* 5.

his

his will; ſo abſolute the ſubordination of his inferior faculties to the infinite love of God, (which ſat regent in the court of his will and underſtanding) that under the moſt dolorous circumſtances, he never conſider'd the miſery, but the obedience; never refus'd *the bitter cup*, if it was in order to *do his Father's will*; but duty and piety were the main ingredients of all his actions. And therefore, now knowing that his time determined by the Father was nigh, he (on this day) took his laſt fatal journey to *Jeruſalem*, in order to the compleating of our redemption. And that he might better fulfill the prophecy that went before of him, he ſent two of his Apoſtles, with an authoritative commiſſion, to fetch him an Aſs to ride on. The holy *Jeſus* had none of his own: He *who was rich, made himſelf poor for our ſakes*; had neither an aſs to ride on, nor an houſe where to lay his head; no, nor after his death, a tomb to lie in, but what the charity of others provided for him. In this his journey to *Jeruſalem*, there plainly appears an admirable mixture of humility and majeſty: The Aſs he rode on became the meekneſs and meanneſs of a prophet; but his commiſſion for the fetching it, and the ready obedience of its owner, ſpake the prerogative of a King: The palms born before him; the garments ſtrew'd in his way; and the joyful *Hoſannahs* and acclamations of the people; proclaim at once both the majeſty of a Prince, and the triumphs of a Saviour. 'Tis ſomewhat ſurprizing to conſider, that the holy *Jeſus*, who rode like a poor man upon an Aſs; a beaſt of burthen, and of the loweſt value; ſhould in that equipage, receive the acclamations due to a mighty Monarch, to the Son of the eternal King. This is a clear demonſtration, that a mean

The circumſtances of his laſt Journey *to* Jeruſalem, *conſider'd.*

mean condition is ſometimes an illuſtrious evidence of a great glory; and that God Almighty makes great honour break forth from the clouds of humility. Let us now conſider, how amiable was the condeſcenſion of our bleſſed redeemer! How honourable his abaſement! He had more ſplendor in the rags of his humility, than all the grandeur of this world could give him: He was more a King, becauſe he would be like a ſervant for our ſakes; and conquer'd more hearts by his ſtupendious love, and unparallel'd ſelf-denial. Certainly, he gave teſtimony that he was the *Meſſias*, and the King of *Sion*; becauſe no other King entred into thoſe Gates riding upon an Aſs, and received the honour of *Hoſannah* under ſuch contradictory circumſtances.

His Weeping over that City, conſider'd.

But, when the holy *Jeſus* was at the foot of mount *Olivet*, in view of *Jeruſalem*, his affections were no leſs compaſſionate towards mankind! For he no ſooner ſet his eyes upon that miſerable City, but he guſh'd out into a ſhower of holy tears; ſo that his day of triumph and jubilee was but a day of ſorrow. He triumph'd to conſider that the redemption of the world was ſo near; and wept bitterly, that men would not be redeem'd: His joy was great, to conſider, that he was to undergo ſo many calamities for our good; and his ſorrow was very great, to conſider, that we would reject thoſe benefits which he tender'd and purchas'd for us by his paſſion. Thus did he moiſten the laurels upon the day of his triumph, with tears of divine love and compaſſion: All the honour that could be given him; all the grandeur that could ſurround him; all the acclamations, and other teſtimonies of publick joy, gave him no entertainment, while he ſaw a whole nation obſtinate

obſtinate to be undone, altho' the King of Angels was willing to lay down his life to ſave them. Thus did our bleſſed Redeemer enter the City of *Jeruſalem*, half triumph and half ſorrow; which was his laſt ſolemn viſit for their recovery: Some ſang *Hoſannah* to him, and others laid their garments at his feet; but at the ſame time, no man would invite him home: for he retir'd in the evening to *Bethany*. And what a notorious inſtance of ingratitude and infidelity was this! not to receive the Lord of life and glory into their houſes; altho' he came to them with the moſt unfeign'd teſtimonies of an endearing love. And yet we do worſe: For now that he is become our Lord, with mightier demonſtrations of his eternal power; we ſuffer him to look round about upon us for months and years together, and perhaps never entertain him, tell our houſe is ready to ruſh upon our heads, and we are deſcending into the chambers of the grave. O, happy is that man who lets ſlip no opportunity of entertaining the great King of Men and Angels! For by receiving him, we more and more receive remiſſion of ſins, redemption, ſanctification, and certain pledges of everlaſting glory.

His driving the Traders out of the Temple, conſider'd.

But to proceed: When the holy *Jeſus* came to *Jeruſalem*, the firſt place we find him in, is the Temple; to teach us to begin every action with God, and to have a high veneration for the place where his honour dwelleth. At this viſitation, our Saviour beheld all things, not for curioſity, but to ſee what was amiſs, and needed amendment: He look'd into all the corners of the Temple; and when he eſpy'd a fair kept upon that holy ground, he (who ſuffered no tranſports of anger in temporal affairs) was born high with an ecſtaſy of holy zeal and religion,

religion, in behalf of the honour of God; which ought to be infinitely dearer to every perſon, than their own intereſt and reputation. Was it not a great affront to the divine Majeſty, to convert his habitation into a market, or a Banker's ſhop? To alienate it from its right uſe, and inſtead of *a houſe of prayer*, to make it *a den of thieves*; of publicans and extortioners, and of the practiſers of the arts of fraud, and the methods of cheating? Was it not unparellel'd preſumption, to ſerve the ends of covetuouſneſs, more than the deſigns of piety? What could enervate the reputation of religion, and depreciate the ſervice of the Almighty, if ſuch actions did not? This therefore, incited the zeal of the holy and immaculate Lamb of God; who, when he had made *a whip of cords, drove the beaſts out of the Temple, overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and commanded thoſe that ſold doves to take them away*: At which time, he aſſerted the ſacredneſs of holy places, in the words of the prophet, which is now made a leſſon evangelical, *my houſe ſhall be called a houſe of prayer to all nations.*

Concluſion. To conclude: Let us all ſeriouſly conſider the ineſtimable mercies of this day, whereon the Lord of life and glory made this progreſs towards the compleating of our redemption! Let us revere his admirable meekneſs and condeſcenſion, and at the ſame time ſing *Hoſannah* with an angelick ſoul. The bleſſed Spirits, who had no need of a Saviour, and who never did offend, do praiſe God with inceſſant voices, for his compaſſion and love to us; and ſeem to invite us, ſaying, O ye ſons of men! *Praiſe the Lord with us*, and *let us magnifie his name together*. How then can we be ſilent, and not join in conſort with the heavenly choir? It may be,

we

we fear we cannot ſing in ſo high a note; yet if we do it with like ſincerity, our lower key may grace the harmony, and compleat the concord. O then let all whom the Lord hath redeemed, and all the glorious Spitits of Heaven, unite their voices, till all the corners of the world do reverberate his praiſe, who hath reſtor'd peace to us, and manifeſted his aſtoniſhing *good-will towards men*: *Hoſannah* in the higheſt!

The PRAYER.

ALmighty and moſt merciful Saviour! who with great humility and infinite love, didſt this day enter into the City of Jeruſalem, *riding upon an Aſs, that thou might'ſt verifie the predictions of the prophets, and conſign to the world an admirable example of meekneeſs and condeſcenſion. Be pleas'd, bleſſed* Jeſus! *to enter into my ſoul with triumph; and give me grace to entertain thee with joy and adoration, and with all the demonſtrations of a perſevering love. O thou! who didſt prepare thy ſelf for hardy exploits, and wenteſt out into the field,* as a giant, *ready* to run the whole courſe *of our miſery; collect my ſcatter'd thoughts, and take off the blemiſhes and deformities of my nature, till thou haſt wrought me up to a reſemblance of thy beauty, and that my whole body, and ſoul, and ſpirit, may be a fit habitation for thy bleſſed ſelf. Grant, that I may diveſt my ſelf of all theſe tranſitory garments, in order to be reinveſted with a robe of thy righteouſneſs: That ſo founding my ſatisfaction upon thee, and the bleſſed intereſts of a virtuous life; I may grow in grace, and be rich in good works, and go on with a ſatisfied and triumphant ſpirit, from imperfecti-*

on

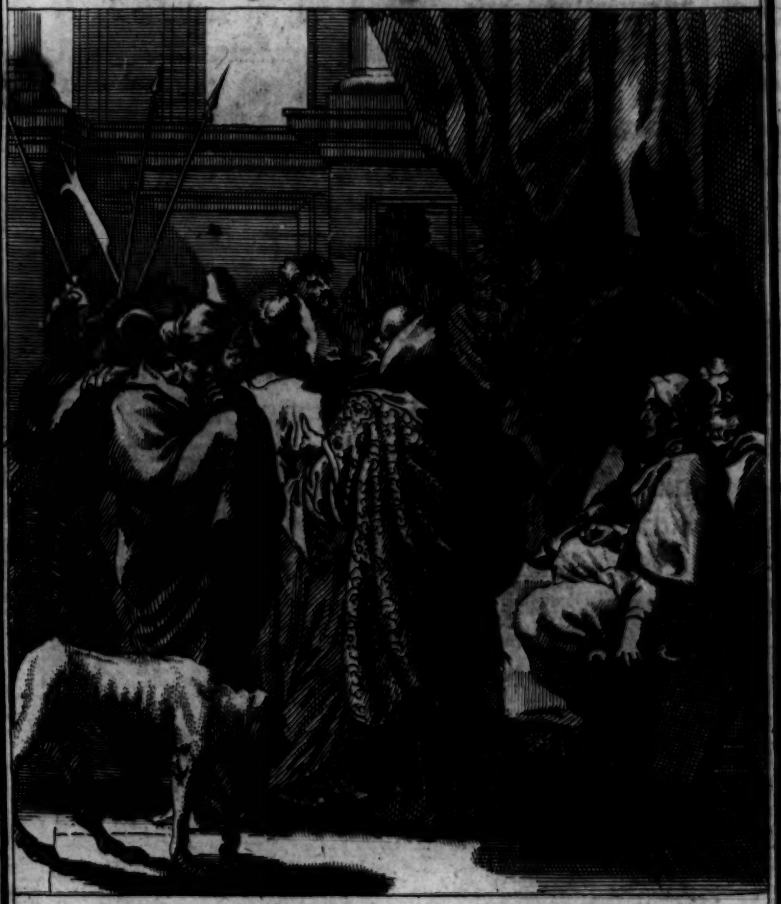
on to ſtrength, from acts to habits, from habits to confirmation in grace; and may ſtill more and more be confirm'd in all heavenly graces, till they are finally conſummated into everlaſting glory. Then will I lay all my victories at thy feet, and with Palms in my hands, and Hallelujahs *on my lips, celebrate thy praiſes to eternity. Grant this, holy* Jeſus! *for thy mercies ſake, and for the honour of thy glorious name, which is, and ſhall be ador'd for evermore.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty and everlaſting God! who of thy tender love towards mankind, haſt ſent thy Son our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, to take upon him our fleſh, and to ſuffer death upon the Croſs, that all mankind ſhould follow the example of his great humility. Mercifully grant, that I may both follow the example of his patience, and alſo be made partaker of his reſurrection, through the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

St Luke Chap. XXII.

Jesus brought before the Sanhedrim.



St. Luke 22. Verse. 70, 71.

Then said they all. Art thou then ye Son *of* God? And He *said unto them Ye say that I am: And they said, What need we any further witness? we our selves have heard etc.*

Morning. Pſal. *Proper.* 22, 40, 54. *Evening.* 69, 88.

GOOD-FRIDAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Gen. 22, to ℣. 20. 2. Joh. 18. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Iſa. 53. 2. 1 Pet. 2.

ON this day, early in the morning, our bleſſed Saviour was brought before the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*, in order to his tryal and condemnation. At which time, the *chief prieſts*, and *ſcribes*, and *elders of the people*, *ſought falſe witneſs againſt* Jeſus, *but could find none* to the purpoſe; for the witneſſes deſtroy'd each others teſtimony, by their diſagreeing. At laſt, *Caiaphas* (who was furiouſly reſolv'd *Jeſus* ſhould die) ſaid unto him, *Art thou the* Chriſt? Our bleſſed Saviour knew his deſign to be an inquiſition of death, not of piety and curioſity, but becauſe *his hour was come*, without any expedient to elude the *high prieſt*'s malice, he made anſwer; That they ſhould find the truth of that, when he ſhould *ſit on the right hand of the power of God*. Whereupon they all unanimouſly cried out; *They had no need of farther witneſs, having had his condemnation from his own mouth*: And ſo they reſolv'd to deliver him up to the *Roman* power. Then the *high prieſt*, and all his *council*, immediately hurried the holy *Jeſus* to the *prætorium*, the palace of [d] *Pontius Pilate*,

Jeſus brought before the Sanhedrim.

And before Pontius Pilate.

[d] Pontius *and* Pilatus *were his* Nomen *and* Cognomen, *in the ſame manner as* Julius *and* Cæſar *are deſcrib'd by* Suetonius; Non Cæſare & Bibulo, ſed Julio, & Cæſare, Coſſ. actum ſcriberent, bis eundem præponentes, nomine atque Cognomine.

the

the *Roman* governor; (a perſon of an high, rough, and untractable ſpirit) hoping he would put their malicious deſigns in execution. But, coming thither, they were afraid to go into an Heathen's houſe, leſt they ſhould be defiled, and ſo be made unfit to eat the paſſover: *Pilate* therefore came out to them at the palace gate, and demanded of them, *What accuſation they had againſt* Jeſus? But, they gave him a general and indefinite anſwer; ſaying, *If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.* Whereupon, *Pilate* (being willing to decline the buſineſs) told them, *If he was a malefactor, they might take him, and judge him according to their own law.* But they not having the power of life and death, alledg'd, truely, *That it was not lawful for them to put any man to death.* The power of life and death, was not in any court of the *Jews*, but in the *Roman* governor alone after the baniſhment of *Archelaus* the ſon of *Herod* the great, and therefore, they anſwer'd him, *It was not lawful*: Not in reſpect of the law of *Moſes*, which gave them both ſufficient power and authority to puniſh diverſe offenders with death; but in relation to the *Roman* Empire, which had taken that dominion from them. Then *Pilate* perceiving their malice, ſtill called for inſtances and arguments of their accuſation. They all preſently began to accuſe him, ſaying, *We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to* Cæſar; *telling us, that he himſelf is* Chriſt *a King.* When *Pilate* heard that, he return'd into his palace, and calling *Jeſus*, ask'd him, *Whether he was the King of the* Jews? *Jeſus* told him, *His Kingdom was not of this World. Pilate*, thinking he had nothing to do with the other, return'd immediately to the *Jews*;

Jews; declaring, that he *found no fault with Jeſus*. But when the *chief Prieſts* and *Rulers* heard *Pilate* pronounce *Jeſus* innocent, they were very much enraged; and began with all their ſpleen and ſatyr, to repreſent him as a *turbulent mover of the people, ſpreading his ſeditious principles throughout all* Gallilee *and* Judæa, *even to* Jeruſalem. *Pilate* hearing them ſpeak of *Galilee*, asked, whether *Jeſus* was a *Galilæan?* and being inform'd that he was, and conſequently of *Herod*'s juriſdiction, he ſent him to that prince, who was then at *Jeruſalem*, at the feaſt. *Herod* was extraordinary glad at the honour done to him; for having frequently heard of his fame, he expected to ſee ſome miracles wrought by him. But the holy *Jeſus*, who had often ſhewn his miracles to poor indigent people, would not proſtitute his gifts, nor gratifie the curioſity of a tyrant polluted with inceſt and blood; nor would he vouchſafe him one anſwer to all his queſtions. *Herod*, being thus deceived in his expectations, look'd upon *Jeſus* as a moſt inſignificant deſpicable perſon, and caus'd him to be arrayed in white, as a mock-King, and ſo remitted him to *Pilate*. And from that day, *Herod* and *Pilate* were made friends.

Pilate *pronounces him innocent,*

He is brought before Herod.

And is ſent back with ſcorn.

When *Pilate* had received the holy *Jeſus*, and found that *Herod* had ſent him back uncondemn'd, he again attempted to reſcue him from the malice of the *Jews*; by declaring, before them all, *That tho' they had brought that Man unto him, as one that perverteth the people; yet, upon examination, he could not find him guilty of any of thoſe crimes whereof they accus'd him: And that* Herod, *to whom he had ſent him, was of the ſame opinion.* And ſo, to comply a little with their fury, he told them, *He would chaſtiſe*

He is again brought before Pilate.

him, and releaſe him. But this propoſal proving ineffectual, he enter'd upon another contrivance to ſave him, which was by making him a Donative and a freed Man at the petition of the people: for he was oblig'd, by a certain cuſtom, to releaſe a criminal every paſſover, whom the *Jews* ſhould nominate. So there being then in priſon a moſt notorious malefactor nam'd *Barabbas*, who had been ſeiz'd with other ſeditious Perſons, becauſe he had committed murther in the inſurrection: *Pilate* juſtly imagined, that if he only propounded *Jeſus* and *Barabbas* to be releas'd, they would make election of an innocent perſon before a robber and a murtherer; and therefore he ſaid unto them all, *Ye have a Cuſtom, that I ſhould releaſe unto you one at the Paſſover; will ye that I releaſe unto you* Barabbas, *or* Jeſus *which is called* Chriſt? Upon which they all cry'd out, *Away with this Man, and give us* Barabbas! Then ſaid *Pilate, what ſhall I do with* Jeſus? They all cry'd out, *Crucifie him! Crucifie him!* Then *Pilate* ask'd them once more, *what evil he had done? for he could find nothing worthy of death; therefore he would ſcourge him and releaſe him.* Whereupon they redoubled their clamours, and in the moſt tumultuous manner imaginable, requir'd that he might be crucified: adding moreover, that *if he let that Man go, he was not* Cæſar's *friend.* *Pilate* finding no arguments effectual, immediately gave orders that *Jeſus* ſhould be ſcourg'd; which the ſoldiers executed with violence and unparallel'd barbarity! expoſing his virginal body to nakedneſs, and tearing his tender fleſh. After this, *they took him into the common-hall, and gathering the whole band of ſoldiers about him, they*

Who in vain propoſes to releaſe him inſtead of Barabbas.

Jeſus *is ſcourg'd.*

they put on him a ſcarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bow'd the knee before him, and mock'd him, ſaying, Hail King of the Jews! *and they beat him, and ſpit upon him.* *Pilate* (tho' a wicked governour) could not behold this without ſome remorſe and pity, and therefore he went again out of his palace, into a conſpicuous place, and cried out to the multitude, *behold the Man!* As much as to ſay, behold this diſmal ſpectacle of ſuffering innocence, and be confounded! hoping this might move them to compaſſion. But they no ſooner ſaw their once-expected King in ſuch dolorous circumſtances, but they more eagerly cried out *Crucifie him! Crucifie him!* *Pilate* at laſt finding that neither the innocence of *Jeſus*, nor his diſcharge from *Herod*, nor his own induſtry and diligence, nor the inconceivable miſery of the afflicted Lamb of God, availed any thing; and that all his attempts to ſave *Jeſus*, did only encreaſe the tumult; he thought he had ſufficiently done his part: So he call'd for a baſon of water, and waſhing his hands before all the people, (as a token of the purity of his intentions) ſolemnly declar'd, *that he was innocent of the blood of that juſt perſon, and that they muſt anſwer for it.* Immediately the multitude impiouſly replied, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* Hereupon *Pilate* releas'd unto them *Barabbas*, and deliver'd up *Jeſus* to be crucified.

Crown'd with Thorns.

Expos'd to the Jews.

And condemn'd to be crucified.

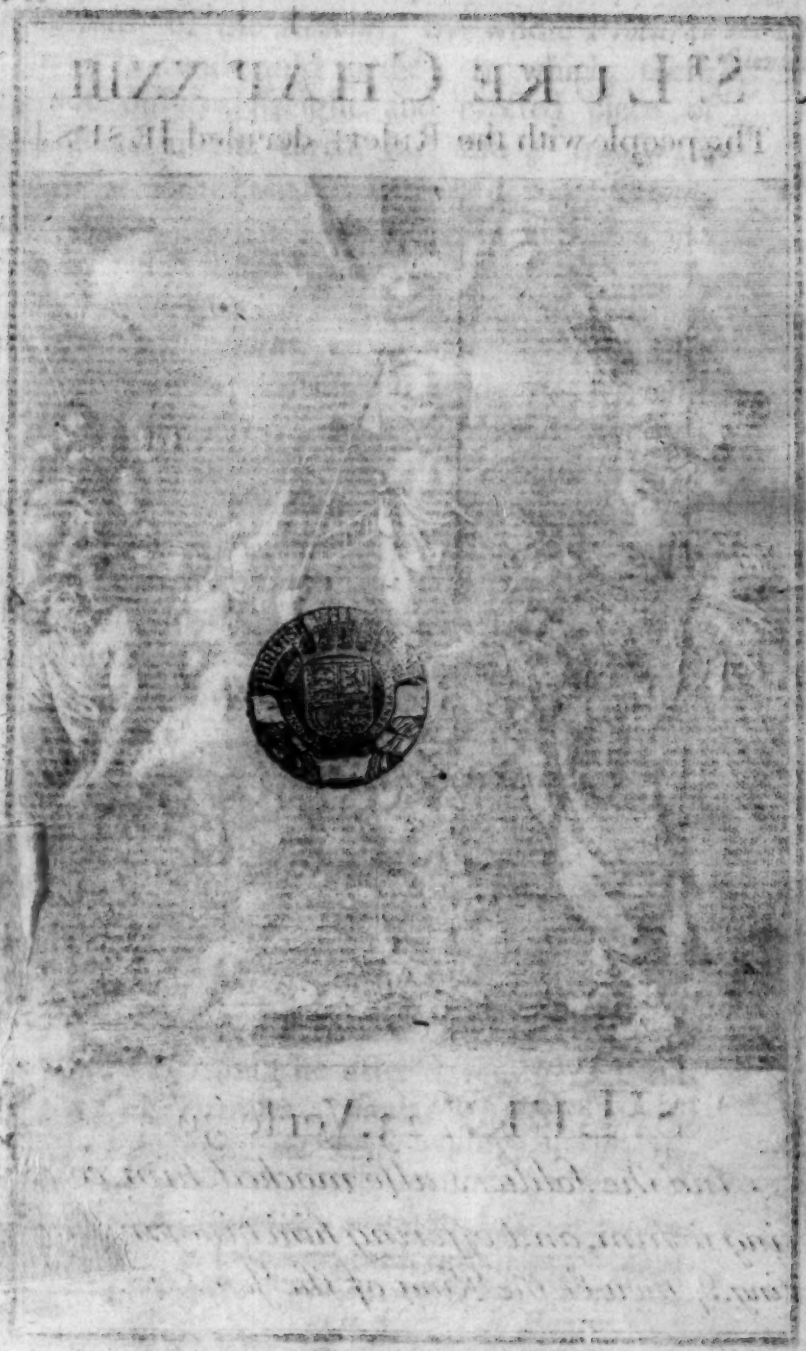
Our bleſſed Saviour being thus condemned, and abandon'd by all the world, the ſoldiers and officers, after new indignities offer'd him, pull'd off the robe of mockery, which in jeſt they had cloathed him with, and put on him his own garments. Then having laid the Croſs, on

He is led through Jeruſalem.

which they intended to crucify him, upon his ſhoulders, they led him through one of the principal ſtreets of the City, to the infinite triumph of his enemies, and the no leſs diſcouragement of his Diſciples. But as ſoon as they came out of *Jeruſalem*, they compell'd one *Simon*, a *Cyrenian*, father to *Alexander* and *Rufus*, to bear his croſs the reſt of the way; for they finding his ſpirits ſo very muſt exhauſted, fear'd he would die ſooner, and with leſs ſmart than they intended. Among the vaſt throngs that followed to ſee the ſad cataſtrophe of this bloody tragedy; there were certain women who could not behold this deplorable object without the higheſt grief and lamentations. But the compaſſionate *Jeſus* turning to them, ſaid, *Daughters of* Jeruſalem, *weep not for me, but for your ſelves and for your children: For behold the days are coming, in the which they ſhall ſay, bleſſed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave ſuck. Then ſhall they begin to ſay to the mountains, fall on us, and to the hills cover us: For if they do theſe things in a green tree, what ſhall be done in the dry?* As much as to ſay, if an innocent perſon be thus cruelly tormented, what muſt ſuch criminals as you expect! Thus was the holy *Jeſus* convey'd out of the City, until he came to *Golgotha*, near *Calvary*; a place difficult in the aſcent, eminent and apt for the publication of ſhame, a hill of death and dead mens bones, polluted and impure. There they offer'd the holy *Jeſus* a mixture of vinegar and gall, of which he refus'd to drink. Then having ſtripped him of his garments, they nail'd him upon the Croſs, between two notorious malefactors. The form of the Croſs on which our Saviour ſuffer'd, was a compounded figure, as it was the

To Golgotha.

And there crucify'd *between two* malefactors.



St. Luke Chap XXIII.

The people with the Rulers derided JESUS.

St. Luke 23. Verse 36.

And the Soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, saying, If thou be the King of the Jews etc.

the cuſtom of the *Romans*, by whoſe *Procurator* he was condemn'd to die: In which, there was not only a ſtreight and erected piece of wood fixed in the earth, but alſo a tranſverſe beam faſten'd unto that towards the top thereof: and beſide theſe two, cutting each other tranſverſly at right angles, there was alſo another piece of wood faſten'd into, and ſtanding out from that which was erected and ſtreight up. To that erected piece was his body, being lifted up, applied, as *Moſes*'s ſerpent to the pole; and to the tranſverſe beam his hands were nail'd: upon the lower part, coming out from the erected piece, his ſacred body reſted; and his Feet were transfix'd and faſten'd with Nails: His Head, being preſſed with a crown of thorns, was applied to that part of the erect which ſtood above the tranſverſe beam; and above his head, to that was faſten'd the (*e*) table, on which was written, in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin* characters, the accuſation, according to the *Roman* cuſtom: And the writing was,

The Faſhion of the Croſs *deſcrib'd.*

JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

When our bleſſed Redeemer was fix'd to the Croſs, the firſt thing he utter'd was a gracious prayer for his enemies; ſaying, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!* At the

(e) *That which was written over the Head of our Saviour, is called ſimply by St.* Luke ἐπιγραφὴ, *by St.* Matthew αἰτία, *by St.* Mark ἡ ἐπιγραφὴ τ̃ αἰτίας, *and by St.* John τίτλ⊙. *making uſe of a Latin Word, as is obſerved by* Nonnus, Καὶ Πιλάτ⊙ ϑητὸν ἐπίγραφε μάρτυρι γόμφῳ Γράμμα, τόπις καλέυση Δαλιτίδι τίτλον ἰωῆ. *From all which we may collect, that there was an Inſcription written over the Head of our Saviour, ſignifying the Accuſation and pretended Crime for which he was condemned to that Death.*

His Garments *are divided.* ſame time, the four ſoldiers which crucified him, took his garments and divided them into four parts, each ſoldier one, but as for his coat, they agreed to caſt lots whoſe it ſhould be, becauſe it was without ſeam, being woven from the top to the bottom. While the patient and immaculate Lamb of God hung thus languiſhing under the acuteſt torments, he was reviled by the Mob, who cried out: *Ah! thou that deſtroyeſt the Temple, and buildeſt it in three days, ſave thy ſelf: if thou be the Son of God, come down from the Croſs.* The *chief prieſts*, with the *ſcribes*, and *elders*, derided him alſo, ſaying, *he ſav'd others! himſelf he cannot ſave: If he be the King of* Iſrael, *let him now come down from the Croſs, and we will believe him. He truſted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him, ſince he has declar'd himſelf the Son of God.* Nay, one of the crucified malefactors us'd the ſame language; but the other malefactor had ſuch a faith, that all the ages of the Church could never parallel it, in all the circumſtances thereof: For when he ſaw the holy *Jeſus* under the ſame condemnation with himſelf, a dying, diſtreſſed man, doing at that time no miracles to atteſt his Divinity or Innocence; yet at that juncture he confeſſes him to be a *Lord*, a *King*, and a *Saviour!* He likewiſe ſhew'd an incomparable modeſty, begging to be *remembred* only, when the bleſſed *Jeſus came into his kingdom.* He reprov'd the other thief for blaſphemy, own'd *Chriſt* publickly, and confeſs'd his own ſhame and unworthineſs. Which combination of pious acts and miraculous converſion, his bleſſed redeemer entertain'd with a promiſe of immediate felicity; ſolemnly aſſuring him, that upon that very day, *he ſhould be with him in Paradiſe.* At the ſame time, there were

His is mock'd by the people.

He forgives the penitent Thief.

were ſtanding by the Croſs, the Mother of *Jeſus*, and her Siſter, and *Mary Magdalen*, and St. *John*. When *Jeſus* therefore ſaw his Mother, and the beloved Diſciple, ſtanding by her, he ſaid, *Woman, behold thy Son*; and look upon him with the kindneſs of a tender parent. And to the Diſciple he ſaid, *behold, thy Mother*; and treat her with all imaginable love and reverence: And from that time, St. *John* took her unto his own houſe.

He takes care of the bleſſed Virgin.

During theſe melancholly tranſactions, the whole frame of nature ſeem'd to be diſſolv'd and out of order, while its Lord and Creator ſuffer'd. The ſun hid its head from beholding ſuch a prodigy of wickedneſs, and there was darkneſs over the face of the whole earth from the ſixth until the ninth hour: About which time, *Jeſus*, being oppreſs'd with inconceivable Torments, cried out with a loud voice, *Eli! Eli! Lama Sabacthani?* (i. e.) *My God! My God! Why haſt thou forſaken me?* His Divinity at this time ſuſpending from his Humanity thoſe comforts with which God's ſervants in their greateſt ſufferings are uſually refreſh'd. Some of the ſpectators hearing the holy *Jeſus* cry out *Eli! Eli!* thought he call'd for *Elias* to take him down from the Croſs. Then *Jeſus* being in the agonies of a high fever, ſaid, *I thirſt*: And immediately one of the *Soldiers ran, and took a ſponge, and fill'd it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink*: And others cried out, *let's ſee whether* Elias *will come to ſave him.* And now the great and glorious Redeemer of mankind, knowing that the propheſies were fulfill'd; his Father's wrath appeas'd; and his torments ſatisfactory; he ſaid, *It is finiſh'd*: Then crying again with a loud voice, he ſaid, *Father, into thy hands I commend my ſpirit!*

The Sun *darken'd.*

Jeſus *cries out in his* Agonies.

And dies. And when he had ſaid theſe words, *he bow'd down his dead, and gave up the ghoſt!*

Several prodigies *attend his* death. Then was the veil of the Temple (which ſeparated the ſecret *Moſaic* rites from the eyes of the people) rent in the midſt from the top to the bottom; there was likewiſe a moſt terrible earthquake as tho' nature were breathing her laſt. The rocks ſplit; the mountains trembled, the graves open'd, and the bodies of dead perſons aroſe after his reſurrection, and appear'd unto many in *Jeruſalem:* And ſo great apprehenſions and amazement happen'd to thoſe that ſtood by, when they ſaw ſo many prodigies, that they departed, ſmiting their breaſts, with ſorrow and fear. The *Centurion* alſo that miniſtred at the execution, in a great conſternation ſaid, *certainly this was a righteous Man!* And he became a diſciple, renouncing his military employment, and died a martyr.

Now the next day being the *Sabbath*, and a *Paſchal* feſtival beſides; the *Jews* deſir'd of *Pilate*, that the bodies of the ſufferers might not continue on the Croſs that day, but that their legs might be broken to haſten their deaths, and their bodies taken down. This was immediately executed upon the two thieves; but coming to *Jeſus*, *they found that he was already dead,*

His ſide is pierc'd. *ſo they brake not his legs:* But *one of the ſoldiers with a ſpear* wantonly *pierced his ſide*, out of which there immediately iſſued forth blood and water. So that two propheſies were thereby fulfill'd together: The firſt, *A bone of him ſhall not be broken:* The ſecond, *They ſhall look on him whom they pierced.*

But altho' the holy *Jeſus* was crucified between two thieves, yet he was not buried with them. For, to reſcue the precious body of the immaculate Lamb of God, from the malicious hands

hands of thoſe that caus'd his crucifixion, there came a rich man of *Arimathæa*, a City of *Judæa*, named *Joſeph*, who (venturing upon the diſpleaſure of the *Jewiſh* Rulers) went confidently to *Pilate*, and begg'd the body of *Jeſus*. The governour was ſurpriz'd to hear he was ſo ſoon dead; but it being affirm'd by the *Centurion*, he order'd his body to be deliver'd to *Joſeph*, who immediately wrapp'd it in fine linen clothes, which he had bought for that purpoſe. At the ſame time, *Nicodemus*, a man of the *Phariſees*, a ruler of the *Jews*, and a maſter of *Iſrael*, being deſirous to ſhare with *Joſeph*, in paying theſe laſt offices to their Maſter, brought a mixture of *Aloes* and *Myrrh*, of about an hundred pound weight; and ſo they two (according to the cuſtom of the *Jews*) bound up the body with an aromatical compoſition, and thus prepared it for burial. Near the place of crucifixion was a garden belonging to *Joſeph*, where he had lately hewn a *Sepulchre* out of a rock for his own proper interment: There they laid the body of the bleſſed *Jeſus*; and to ſecure it from external injury, they rolled a large maſſie ſtone to the mouth or door thereof. But the *Jews* were all this time under circumſtances of diſſatisfaction, leſt his *Diſciples ſhould ſteal him away by night*, and ſo report that *he was riſen from the Dead*. To prevent this, they immediately made their application to *Pilate*, deſiring that the *Sepulchre* might be kept under a ſtrict guard. *Pilate* gave them liberty to do what they pleas'd, even to the removal of their ſmalleſt ſcruples. They therefore ſeal'd the *Sepulchre*, and (as an ancient tradition ſays) bound it about with labels of Iron, and ſet a watch of ſoldiers about it. Thus was the whole funeral action perform'd, and the burial

His body begg'd.

And buried.

burial compleated: So that it was not lawful, by the cuſtom of the *Jews*, any more to open the *Sepulchre*, or diſturb the *interr'd body*.

Epiſtle. Heb. 10. from ℣. 1. to 26.

MEDITATIONS FOR GOOD-FRIDAY.

Goſpel. S. Joh. 19. from ℣. 1. to 38.

SINCE the end and deſign of *Jeſus Chriſt*'s coming into the world, and all the circumſtances of his bitter death and paſſion, was to procure Salvation for men; it is highly reaſonable, that we ſhould ſeriouſly meditate upon the inconceivable miſeries which he endur'd for our ſakes; and at the ſame time, admire the bright emanations of his tranſcendent love. If the glorious and immaculate Lamb of God had fewer attractive excellencies, yet his cruel ſufferings for us, propound arguments ſo powerful as muſt needs touch us with a moſt paſſionate ſenſe. For, let us but contemplate him in the garden of *Gethſemane*, entring upon the ſcene of the fatal tragedy that was then approaching, and amaz'd at that bitter cup, mix'd with all the ingredients of the divine diſpleaſure: There his ſoul was overwhelm'd with an inexpreſſible anguiſh! an anguiſh that ſunk and depreſs'd him into as deep a dejection, as 'twas poſſible for an innocent mind to endure; cauſing him to ſigh out that melting complaint to his Diſciples, περίλυπός ἐιςιν ἡ ψυχή μκ! *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful!* And leſt they ſhould not apprehend the exceſs, adding ἕως θανάτυ! *even unto death!* It was a ſorrow, which like the *pangs of death encompaſs'd him*, (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks) *and like the pains of Hell gat hold upon him!* (*Pſal.* cxvi.

Our Saviour's agony *in the* garden, *conſider'd.*

cxvi. 3.) The effect of all which, was, that he *prayed more earneſtly*, and with the higheſt marks of the moſt intenſe grief, made three ſeveral addreſſes unto Heaven, that, if it might conſiſt with his Father's will, this *bitter cup might paſs from him.* (*Matt.* xxvi. 39.) Nor were his cryes and tears the ſole evidences of his internal ſufferings: nor yet could the ſorrows of his breaſt be diſcharged at the common paſſages, but even the very pores of his body give vent to more lively repreſentations of the inconceivable anguiſh of his ſoul: And therefore, while he was under this violent agony, the ſweat that diſtill'd from his ſacred body, was like *large drops of Blood falling to the ground.* (*Luke* xxii. 44.) It was certainly no light conflict within, that caus'd ſo ſtrange a ſymptom without: For if an extreme fear or trouble will many times caſt us into a cold ſweat, how pungent and afflictive muſt be the commotion and conflict of our Saviour's mind, which could force open the numerous pores of his body, lock'd up by the coldneſs of the night! and make not drops of ſweat, but *great drops*, or (as the word θρόμβοι ſignifies, *clods of Blood* to iſſue from them! While our Lord was thus contending with the preludes to his paſſion, an Angel was ſent from Heaven to ſtrengthen him; at a time when nature was brought to the loweſt ebb, and was diſſolving her ſelf in a mortal ſweat. But immediately after came *Judas*, beginning war with (*f.*) a kiſs, and breaking the peace of his Lord by the ſymbol of kindneſs. Then was the holy *Jeſus* dragg'd by the rude and incens'd multitude into

The circumſtances of our Saviour's death, *conſider'd and illuſtrated.*

(*f*) O Signum Sacrilegum! O placitum fugiendum! ubi ab Oſculo incipitur Bellum, and per pacis indicium pacis rumpitur Sacramentum. *Aug. Ser.* 12.

into the City, and there hurried up and down to all the judicatories in it, and treated with the moſt barbarous indignities. That adorable face, which Angels behold with reverence and joy unſpeakable, which ſheds its bright beams of light, and fills all Heaven with tranſport and triumph, was then defiled and ſtained with the ſpittings of unhallow'd lips! Struck with the palms of ſacrilegious hands! cover'd and blind-folded in deriſion! and the Lord of the univerſe made a laughing-ſtock to the rabble, and inhumanly buffetted, as if he had been the vileſt of ſlaves! Then theſe obdurate Wretches dragg'd him to the palace of the *Roman Procurator*; and after many inſignificant attempts, they accus'd him for a figurative ſpeech; which if it had been ſpoke in a literal ſenſe, and had been acted too according to the Letter, had been ſo far from a fault, that it would have been a proof of his miraculous power, and that God was with him of a truth: Nay, and at the ſame time it had been eaſier to have rais'd the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, than the Temple of his Body. However, the Lamb of God left his cauſe to defend itſelf, under the protection of his heavenly Father, and bore all ſorts of injuries and affronts with patience invincible. He who had *done no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth*; nay, he who had gone about conſtantly doing good, and ſignalized himſelf by miracles of mercy without number; this Man is refus'd, and *Barabbas* a traitor, a thief, a murderer, one publickly and notoriouſly guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, was preferr'd before him. O unparallel'd Stupidity? how unequal was the compariſon? How abſurd the exchange? How infatuated the perſons that made it? How corrupt the judge that allow'd it? For that wicked

wicked magiſtrate was ſufficiently ſenſible, that envy was at the bottom of all theſe proceedings; and yet that ſenſe reſtrain'd him not from conſenting to all their inhumanity: But he too (in deſpight of the checks of his own mind) lent a helping-hand to the afflictions of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, and vex'd that ſoul which they had injuriouſly wounded. He ſent him bound to *Herod*; and *Herod* remitted him to *Pilate*, array'd in a gorgeous robe, that he might be ſtill the more expos'd to contempt and ſcorn. And at laſt, when they had cruelly ſcourg'd him, and even wearied themſelves with inflicting all manner of ignominy and torture, they nail'd him to the Croſs; which was the moſt ſervile puniſhment allotted for the worſt of villains; and always eſteem'd both [g] grievous for its pain, and [h] infamous for its kind. The exquiſite pains and torments of that death are manifeſt, in that the Hands and feet, which of all the parts of the body are moſt nervous, and conſequently moſt ſenſible, were pierc'd thro' with nails; which caus'd not a ſudden, but a lingring and tormenting death. And tho' our Saviour was dead in ſix hours ſpace, to the admiration of his executioners, (it being uſual for ſuch to live whole days on the Croſs, till hunger had ſtarv'd, or fowls devour'd them;) yet this event might be owing to the quickneſs of his perception and ſenſes; to his agony, fatigue of his trial and bearing his own Croſs; or to a voluntary reſignation of life, when he *made his*

[g] Illà morte pejus nihil fuit inter omnia genera mortium. *St. Aug. in Joan.* Tully *calls it*, Crudeliſſimum teterrimumque ſupplicium. *And* Auſonius, Pœnæ extremum.

[h] Pone Crucem Servo, *Juven.* *So in* Terence, *Pamp.* Quid meritus es? *Da.* Crucem,

ſoul

ſoul an offering for ſin and gave up the ghoſt. His ſhame and ignominy were proportionate to the torments which he endur'd, and to be expos'd to publick view for many hours, as a malefactor, whilſt the beholders deteſt the crime, and abhor the ſuppoſed criminal, was an heavy aggravation of it. Thus were his ſorrows augmented, and his Sufferings made intollerable! His pure and virginal hands, which were never ſtretch'd out but to do good, were pierc'd; and thoſe ſacred feet which bore the Redeemer of the world, and for which the waters had a reverence, were nail'd to the croſs. His bleſſed and immaculate body, the precious workmanſhip of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and the temple of the Deity was mangled and defac'd. He that is the glory of Heaven, and the King of all the heavenly Hoſt, was made the ſcorn of thieves and traitors. The omnipotent Lord of Life was crucify'd between two thieves, in the face of all the world. This was ſuch a ſtupendious ſubmiſſion of the Son of God, that univerſal nature relented at his laſt ſufferings. The Sun was ſtruck with horror, and withdrew its light; it did not appear crown'd with beams, when the Creator was with thorns. The earth trembled, the rocks ſplit, and the moſt inſenſible creatures ſympathiz'd with the Saviour of the world.

The nature of our Saviour's Suffering in the Fleſh, explain'd.

But now, upon the whole matter, I hope no Chriſtian can think, that the Deity, which is impaſſible, could ſuffer; for ſuch a wild opinion would reſemble the traditions of the *Arian* and *Apollinarian* hereticks. The divine Nature is of infinite and eternal happineſs, and being immutable is not ſubject to any ſenſe of miſery. 'Tis very certain, that Perſon which was *begotten of the Father before the worlds*, was really the

the Lord of glory, and moſt truly God, tho' he took upon him the nature of man; and in that nature, being ſtill the ſame perſon which before he was, did ſuffer: But then the union of the two natures could put no imperfection upon the Divinity; nor can that infinite Nature, by any diſpenſation be chang'd in its eſſential perfections. If the bright rays of the Sun are thought to inſinuate into noiſome bodies, without any pollution of themſelves; how can that ſpiritual eſſence contract the leaſt infirmity by any union with humanity? So we muſt neither harbour ſo low an eſtimation of the Divine Nature, as to conceive it capable of any diminution; nor entertain ſo mean an eſteem of the Word, as to imagine it ſubject to the ſufferings of the fleſh he took; nor yet ſo groundleſs an opinion of the great myſtery of the incarnation, as to make the properties of one nature mix in confuſion with the other. But this we may depend upon, as a moſt neceſſary, certain, and infallible Truth; that the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father, and of the ſame eſſence with the Father, did, for the redemption of mankind, really and truly ſuffer: Not in his Divinity, which was impaſſable; but in his humanity, which in the days of his humiliation, was ſubject unto our infirmities. That he took a true and real body, ſo as to become fleſh of our fleſh, and bone of our bone: And that this body was frail and mortal, as being accompanied with all thoſe natural properties which neceſſarily flow from the condition of a frail and mortal body, ſuch as hunger and thirſt. Nor was it only liable to thoſe internal weakneſſes and natural infirmities, but to all outward injuries, and violent impreſſions. For as all our corporal pain conſiſts in that ſenſe which

which ariſeth from the ſolution of that continuity which is natural to the parts of our body; ſo no parts of his ſacred body were injuriouſly violated by any outward impreſſion, but he was truly and fully ſenſible of the pain ariſing from that violation. Deep was that ſenſe, and grievous was that pain, which thoſe ſcourges produc'd: And the tearing of thoſe nervous parts, created a moſt ſharp and dolorous ſenſation. The crown of thorns did not only expreſs the ſcorn of the impoſers; but did alſo pierce his tender and ſacred temples. That ſpear, directed by an impertinent curioſity, which opened his ſide, tho' it brought forth water and blood, caus'd no painful ſenſation, becauſe his body was then dead: But the nails which pierc'd his hands and feet made another kind of impreſſion, while it was yet alive, and highly ſenſible. Thus was the bleſſed *Jeſus a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief*, and underwent far greater miſeries for our ſakes, than it is poſſible for the moſt deliberate pen to deſcribe, or the moſt inlarged thought to comprehend!

The influence which Chriſt's Crucifixion *ought to have on us.*

When therefore, I repreſent to my ſelf my bleeding Saviour hanging upon the Croſs, and view the ſadneſs of his countenance, disfigured with ſweat and blood: When I look upon his bleſſed body ſcourg'd and bruis'd, and expos'd to the publick view of the vileſt malefactors: When I conſider how his hands and feet were gor'd with pins of iron; his limbs diſtorted with anguiſh; how he was mock'd in the very agonies of death with a bitter potion, even till his Spirits were quite exhauſted with pain, and all for my redemption! it muſt needs render him full of lovelineſs to the coldeſt imagination. Shall not the warm ſtreams, iſſuing from his wounded

wounded head, melt my congeal'd affections, and fill me with an ecſtaſy of holy love? Certainly, I cannot behold him enduring all theſe miſeries for my ſake with an unconcern'd eye. O no! let my head be a fountain of waters, and my tears ſwell into a flood, that I may bear a part in all the ſorrows of my afflicted Saviour. For never was any inſtance of kindneſs ſo engaging, ſo irreſiſtible, as that moſt ſhameful, and moſt bitter death, which the Lord of life did ſubmit to, for the accompliſhing of the moſt glorious work of man's redemption: This is the conſideration, which of all others, ſhould excite our devotion moſt fervently, entertain it moſt agreeably, and raiſe it to the loftieſt pitch! For what humane or angelical underſtanding could have conceiv'd ſuch a thought, that the Son of God ſhould die to ſave us from eternal death? And therefore, what a commanding influence ought this myſterious work to have upon our hearts, and diſpoſitions; and how ſtrongly ſhould it draw our affections and practice, to imitate thoſe graces ſo conſpicuous in the Perſon of our bleſſed Redeemer? Certainly, his death is exceeding pregnant with encouragements to obedience: For we muſt be prodigies of ingratitude, if we think it much to render him thoſe duties which he demands of us; and which he demands for no other reaſon, but becauſe they are neceſſary to our happineſs. His blood beſpeaks our duty and gratitude, and that in ſuch a language, and with ſuch powerful rhetorick and perſuaſion, as, I hope, is impoſſible for us to reſiſt: If we do, thoſe that liv'd and died in the darkneſs of heatheniſm, will have a more tolerable and cooler portion in Hell, than we who neglect ſuch great ſalvation.

O Holy and immaculate lamb of God! who by thy obedience unto death, even the death of the Croſs, didſt become the ſacrifice of the world; the great example of patience; the Lord of life; the good Shepherd laying down his life for his ſheep, and the Mediator between God and Man: Teach me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, frequently and devoutly to meditate upon the glorious marks and monuments of thy bitter paſſion. O make them effectual for raiſing me up from the death of ſin, to the life of righteouſneſs! Guard me, I pray thee, from the ſubtil inſinuations of the tempter; ſtrengthen and defend me againſt his aſſaults: Make the yoke of thy commandments eaſy, and the burthen of the Croſs, which thou requireſt me to carry after thee, by thy ſuſtaining comforts, portable and light. And, that I may obtain the privilege of having no particular paſſage of my crucified Lord's likeneſs left unimpreſs'd upon me; let the crown of thorns, the nails that bor'd thy ſacred hands and feet, the lance that pierced thy holy ſide, be the entertainment of my retir'd thoughts, and the glad ſubject of my never-ceaſing praiſe. Grant that no indiſpoſition nor incapacity of mine may hinder the wonderful operations of thy grace; that ſo I may by thy aid, and by thy example obey my heavenly Father, with all the powers and faculties of my ſoul, and when I depart this mortal Life, be made partaker of a glorious reſurrection, thro' thy merits and interceſſion, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus! *Amen.*

ALmighty God! I beſeech thee graciouſly to behold this thy family, for which our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* was contented to be betrayed and given up into the hands of wicked Men, and to ſuffer death upon the Croſs, who now liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

II.

ALmighty and everlaſting God! by whoſe ſpirit the whole body of the Church is govern'd and ſanctified; receive my ſupplications and prayers, which I offer before thee for all eſtates of Men in thy Holy Church; that every member of the ſame in his Vocation and Miniſtry, may truly and godly ſerve thee; thro' our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*. Amen.

III.

O Merciful God! who haſt made all Men, and hateſt nothing that thou haſt made nor wouldeſt the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould be converted and live: Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Infidels and Hereticks, and take from them, all ignorance, hardneſs of heart, and contempt of thy word, and ſo fetch them home bleſſed Lord, to thy flock, that they may be ſav'd among the remnant of the true Iſraelites, and be made one fold, under one Shepherd *Jeſus Chriſt* our *Lord*, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Morning.
Pſalm
Proper.
2. 57.
111.
Evening.
113, 114,
118

EASTER-DAY.

1 Leſſ.
Exod. 12.
2. *Rom.* 6.
Evening.
1 Leſſ.
Exod. 14.
2. *Acts* 2.
℣. 22.

ON the firſt day of the week, (which we call the Lord's day) early in the morning, *Mary Magdalen*, and ſome other devout and pious Women had prepar'd ſweet ſpices and ointments, with a deſign to embalm the Body of their crucified Lord: And as they were haſtning to the *Sepulchre*, their main care and conſultation was how they ſhould remove the large ſtone from the mouth of the Tomb. But not long before their arrival, the omnipotent Lord of life and glory, had made a full conqueſt over Death, (*i.*) and broke forth from the bowels of the earth, with a terrible commotion like that at his death, being followed by the Reſurrection of ſeveral of the Saints, who appeared to many in the City. At the ſame time, an Angel from Heaven; whoſe refulgent countenance was like lightning, and his raiment like the whiteſt ſnow, having roll'd away the ſtone, ſat upon it; the ſight of whom, (together with the noiſe of the earth-

Jeſus's Reſurrection.

(*i.*) Aurora Lucis rutilat,
Cœlum Laudibus intonat.
Mundus exſultans jubilat,
Gemens Infernus Ululat,
Cum Rex ille fortiſſimus,
Mortis confractis Viribus,
Pede conculcans Tartara,
Solvit à pœnâ miſeros.
Ille qui clauſus Lapide,
Cuſtoditur ſub Milite,
Triumphans pompâ nobili.
Victor ſurgit de Funere.

Hymn. Paſc.

St. Luke Chap. XXIV.

The Resurrection of Christ.

St. Luke 24, Verse 7.

The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

earthquake,) ſo affrighted the ſoldiers who guarded the Sepulchre that they *became like dead Men*: So that when the Women came to the place, and miſſing the body of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, they were extremely ſurpriz'd. In the midſt of their aſtoniſhment, they were ſaluted by an Angel, who told them, that *Jeſus* was riſen, and bad them go, and acquaint his Apoſtles, and particularly *Peter*, that he was returned from the dead, and that he would go before them into *Galilee*, where, they ſhould meet with him. Hereupon, *Mary Magdalen* return'd back, and acquainted the Apoſtles with what had paſs'd, who look'd upon the ſtory as the product of a weak and frighted fancy. But *Peter* and *John* preſently haſten'd towards the garden; *John* being the younger and nimbler, out-ran his companion, and came firſt thither; where he only look'd in, but entred not, either out of fear in himſelf, or a great reverence to our Saviour. *Peter*, though behind in pace was equal in zeal, and being elder, and more conſiderate, came and reſolutely entred in, where he found nothing but the linen clothes lying together in one place, and the napkin that was about his head, decently wrapp'd together in another; which being diſpos'd with ſo much care and order, demonſtrated (contrary to what was falſly ſuggeſted by the *Jews*,) that our Saviour's body was not taken away by thieves, who are wont more to conſult their eſcape, than how to leave things orderly diſpos'd behind them.

Mary Magdalen, though ſhe came with *Peter* and *John* to the Sepulchre, yet ſhe went not away with them, being very much dejected for the loſs of her great Maſter. And whilſt ſhe was looking into the Tomb in a melancholy diſconſolate manner, ſhe diſcover'd two Angels in

glorious apparel, ſitting in the place where the body of *Jeſus* had lain; the one at the head, and the other at the feet. The Angels ſaid unto her, *Woman why weepeſt thou?* to which ſhe anſwer'd; *Becauſe they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.* But looking behind her, ſhe immediately ſaw *Jeſus*; and ſuppoſing him to be the Gardiner, ſhe ſaid to him, *Sir, if thou haſt born him hence; tell me where thou haſt laid him, and I will take him away.* But *Jeſus ſaid unto her*, Mary! Then ſhe knew his voice, and being tranſported with joy and wonder, ſhe cried out, *Rabboni! My Maſter!* and was ready to have preſs'd his feet with her embraces. But *Jeſus* ſaid unto her, *Touch me not; for I am not yet aſcended to my Father: But go to my Brethren the Apoſtles, and tell them, that I go to my Father and your Father: to my God, and your God.* *Mary* immediately went to the Diſciples, and told them, that *ſhe had ſeen the Lord*: But their ſorrows were ſo great, and their faith ſo weak, that they believ'd her not.

His firſt appearance to Mary Magdalen.

In the mean time, the other Women were met by our Lord, who gave them this ſalutation, *All hail!* and they in an ecſtaſy fell down at his feet, and ador'd him: *Jeſus* bad them fear nothing, but appoint his Brethren to go into *Galilee*, where they ſhould ſee him.

His ſecond appearance to certain Women.

While theſe Women were executing the orders given them by the holy *Jeſus*; ſome of the ſoldiers who guarded his Sepulchre, ran into *Jeruſalem*, and related all that had happen'd to the chief prieſts and rulers, who immediately aſſembled together to conſult upon this important affair. And as their malice was beyond all example, ſo they were reduc'd to the moſt wretched ſhift, and to the moſt unaccountable ſubornation that ever rulers invented; namely, *That his Diſciples*

Diſciples ſtole him away by night, while the watch were aſleep: And to encourage the ſoldiers to publiſh this incredible and weak fable, they gave them a conſiderable ſum of money. The ſoldiers readily accepted it, and did as they were order'd; ſo that this report was ſpread abroad, and was commonly told among the *Jews* for a long time after. *The* Guards *br ib'd.*

The ſame day, two of his Diſciples took a walk to a village call'd *Emmaus*, (about ſeven miles and an half diſtant from *Jeruſalem*) and in the way, as they were diſcourſing of the late occurrences, *Jeſus* himſelf overtook them in the diſguiſe of a traveller, and ſeeing them very melancholy and dejected, he ask'd them the ſubject of their diſcourſe. One of them nam'd *Cleopas*, ſaid unto him. *Art thou a ſtranger in* Jeruſalem, *and haſt not known the things which are come to paſs there in theſe days?* And he ſaid unto them, *What things?* And they made anſwer; *Concerning* Jeſus *of* Nazareth, *which was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God, and all the people: And how the* chief Prieſts *and* Rulers *deliver'd him to be condemn'd to death, and have crucified him. But we truſted that it had been he which ſhould have redeem'd* Iſrael: *And beſides all this, to day is the third day ſince thoſe things were done. Yea, and certain women alſo of our company made us aſtoniſh'd, which were early at the Sepulchre: And when they found not his body, they came, ſaying, that they had alſo ſeen a viſion of Angels, which ſaid that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us, went to the Sepulchre, and found it even ſo as the women had ſaid; but him they ſaw not.* From hence *Jeſus* took an occaſion to reprove their incredulity, ſaying to them, *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken! Ought* Jeſus's *third appearance to two* Diſciples.

not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things and to enter into his glory? Luke xxiv. 18--25, 26. And he explain'd to them all that was ſpoken in the Scriptures concerning him; beginning at *Moſes* and going thro' all the Prophets. When they came to *Emmaus*, the holy *Jeſus* went on, as if he was going farther, but the two Diſciples importun'd him to ſtay, becauſe the day was far ſpent. The holy *Jeſus* condeſcended to grant their requeſt, and as he ſat at meat with them, he took bread, bleſſed it, and having broken it, he gave it to them, as he had done formerly, whereupon their eyes were open'd, and they knew him; but he immediately vaniſhed out of their ſight. Then they were extremely ſurpriz'd, and ſaid one to another, *Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us in the way, and while he open'd to us the Scriptures?* And inſtantly they aroſe, and return'd to *Jeruſalem*, where they found the Apoſtles aſſembled, declaring that *Jeſus* was undoubtedly riſen, and had appeared unto *Peter*. Whereupon, theſe two related what had happen'd in the way, and how the *Lord was made known to them by breaking of bread.* Notwithſtanding all this, ſeveral remain'd incredulous, and none of theſe ſtupendious atteſtations could eſtabliſh in their hearts the certainty of the Reſurrection.

His fourth appearance to Peter.

But on the very ſame day, the *Apoſtles being aſſembled privately, for fear of the* Jews, were diſcourſing about theſe ſeveral appearances of their Maſter; and as they were at meat, *the doors being ſhut*, Jeſus came, and ſtood in the midſt of them, ſaying, *Peace be unto you*: At which the Apoſtles were all extremely terrify'd, ſuppoſing it had been a Spirit. But *Jeſus* confuted them by the philoſophy of their ſenſes, by their

The fifth appearance to the Apoſtles.

their feeling his fleſh and bones, which Spirits have not: For he gave them his benediction, ſhewing them his hands and his feet. The Apoſtles were then tranſported with ſuch ecſtaſies of joy and admiration, that they could ſcarce believe what they ſaw, till *Jeſus* ask'd them, whether they had any thing to eat? Whereupon they produc'd a *piece of a broild fiſh*, and of an *honey-comb*, *and he eat before them*: Not to nouriſh his body; for that being ſpiritualiz'd by his Reſurrection, had no need of ſuch nutriment; but to confirm their faith, and to give undeniable proof that he was really riſen from the dead. After ſupper, he ſaid unto them a ſecond time, *Peace be unto you*, and breathing upon them he ſaid, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt. Whoſeſoever ſins ye remit, they are remitted to them; and whoſeſoever ſins ye retain, they are retain'd:* And that convey'd another branch of clerical power, with which *Jeſus* inſtructed his Diſciples, in order to their great commiſſion of preaching and government eccleſiaſtical. And thus ended the firſt day of the week, which in honour of the Reſurrection, has ever ſince been kept as the *Sabbath* among the Chriſtians.

The obſervation of this day is as ancient as the glorious Reſurrection of our bleſſed Lord. The Fathers call it [k] the bright and glorious day of *Chriſt*'s riſing from the dead: The nobleſt of the chriſtian ſolemnities: [l] The holy and venerable day that brought life into the world: The great and holy *Sunday*: The day in which the hopes of eternity were confirm'd to us: And the great day, in which ſalvation was given to the world. We call it *Eaſter-*

k *Chryſoſtom.* Tom. 5.
l *Euſeb.* Vit. Conſt.

day,

Easter the ſignification thereof.

day, from *Oeſt* which ſignifies *Ariſing*, or the *Eaſt*; and *Star*, which imports a luminary from Heaven: And therefore, 'tis moſt emphatically applied to *Chriſt* and his Reſurrection whoſe name is the *Eaſt*, and who likewiſe is the bright *Morning-Star*. The eves, or vigils of this [m] Feſtival were wont to be celebrated with more than ordinary preparation; with ſolemn watchings, with multitudes of lighted torches, both in the Churches and their own private houſes, ſo as to turn the night itſelf into day: And this they obſerv'd (as *Nazianzen* intimates) as a forerunner of that ſtupendious light, even the *Sun of righteouſneſs*, which the next day aroſe upon the world. This was a time ſacred to works of mercy and charity; every one both of the clergy and laity ſtriving to contribute liberally to the poor. Therefore no ſooner did the morning of this day appear, but *Conſtantine* us'd to ariſe, and in imitation of the love and kindneſs of our bleſſed Redeemer, to beſtow his richeſt and nobleſt Gifts, and to diffuſe the influences of his bounty over all the parts of his Empire. And his example herein was followed by moſt of his ſucceſſors, who us'd upon this ſolemnity, by their imperial orders, to cauſe all priſons to be open'd; the fetters to be knock'd off, and the perſons ſet at liberty: This they thought very congruous and ſuitable to this happy ſeaſon, that all perſons might be enabled to rejoice at a time, when we remember the inexhauſtible fountain of all our mercies.

How obſerv'd by the Primitive Chriſtians.

[m] Naz. Orat. 2. in Paſch.

MEDI-

Epiſtle. Col. 3, from ℣. 1. to ℣. 8.

MEDITATIONS FOR EASTER-DAY.

Goſpel. John 20. from ℣. 1. to ℣. 11.

THE glorious Reſurrection of the great Redeemer of the world, is a ſubject that deſerves our higheſt admiration, and moſt exalted praiſe. It is the great article of Chriſtianity; the prop and pillar of our faith, that bears up the whole body of that divine inſtitution; and that confirms the credit of whatever our Saviour ſaid or did. If he had remain'd in the grave, it had been reaſonable to believe him an ordinary Perſon, and that his death had been the puniſhment of his preſumption; but his Reſurrection was the moſt illuſtrious and convincing evidence that he was what he declared himſelf to be. And therefore, of all the articles of the chriſtian faith, it is our moſt important concern to be well inform'd and aſſur'd of this.

The Reſurrection *of our* Saviour *the foundation of* Chriſtianity.

And in order hereunto, it will be neceſſary firſt to conſider what are the eſſential characters and properties of a true Reſurrection. Now (to make uſe of the words of a very learned writer) the proper notion of the reſurrection conſiſts in this, that it is a ſubſtantial change, by which that which was before, and was corrupted, is re-produc'd the ſame thing again. It is ſaid to be a change, that it may be diſtinguiſhed from a ſecond or a new creation: For if God ſhould annihilate a Man or Angel, and make the ſame Man or Angel out of nothing, tho' it were a reſtitution of the ſame thing, yet were it not properly a Reſurrection, becauſe it

The true nature of a proper Reſurrection.

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is not a change or proper mutation, but a pure and total production. This change is call'd a ſubſtantial change, to diſtinguiſh it from all accidental alterations: He which awaketh from his ſleep, ariſeth from his bed, and there is a greater change from ſickneſs to health; but neither of theſe is a Reſurrection. It is call'd a change of that which was, and hath been corrupted, becauſe things immaterial and incorruptible, cannot be ſaid to riſe again: Reſurrection implying a re-production, and that which after it was, never was not, cannot be re-produc'd. Again of thoſe things which are material and corruptible, of ſome, the forms continue and ſubſiſt after the corruption of the whole, of others not. The forms of inanimate bodies, and all irrational ſouls, when they are corrupted, ceaſe to be; and therefore if they ſhould be produc'd out of the ſame matter, yet were not this a proper reſurrection; becauſe thereby there would not be the ſame individual which was before, but only a reſtitution of the *Species* by another individual. But when a rational ſoul is ſeparated, from its body, which occaſions the corruption of a Man, that ſoul ſo ſeparated doth exiſt, and conſequently is capable of a re-union with the body; and if the two be again united by an eſſential and vital union, from which life doth neceſſarily flow, then doth the ſame Man live, which liv'd before; and conſequently this re-union is a perfect and proper Reſurrection from death to life, becauſe the ſame individual perſon, conſiſting of the ſame ſoul and body, which was dead, is now alive again.

From hence 'tis eaſy to infer that our Saviour did truly and properly riſe from the dead. For, that *Chriſt* had before his death, a proper life,

life, arising from the union of soul and body, is as certain as his humanity, which he demonstrated in all the faculties, passions, infirmities, and necessities, incident to a mortal life. And then 'tis as certain, that he suffer'd a true and proper dissolution at his death, his soul being really separated, and his body left in the same condition as our dead bodies are: This plainly appears by the mortal wound given him by the spear, that fetch'd out blood and water from his side: From the opinion of all the spectators, and satisfaction of his vigilant enemies: and by his yielding up the ghost so publickly: Nay his death is attested by his very enemies. *Tacitus*, a *Pagan*, relates that he suffer'd under *Pontius Pilate*. And the *Jews* to this day, are so unhappy as to boast of their being the causes of his crucifixion, and call him by a name that is the mark of his punishment. So that his death was plain and unquestionable; from which if ever he return'd, it must consequently be by a true and certain Resurrection. And that he did truly and certainly return, and that the same soul was re-united to the same body, we are assured by all the most unexceptionable testimonies that any matter of fact can possibly be capable of. For at his Resurrection, the Disciples find the stone roll'd away from the mouth of his *Sepulchre*, and no body therein, altho' it had been guarded by soldiers, so that it was impossible for any one to steal him away. Afterwards he was seen alive, by those very persons who had before seen him dead. And that it was his own body, and no aerial phantasm, evidently appears by what he did to convince St. *Thomas*, who would not believe unless he might put his hand into the hole of his side, and see the print of the nails that pierced

The verity of our Saviour's Resurrection.

Confirm'd by several Instances.

pierced his hands; to which our Saviour readily condeſcended. Moreover, none of the Apoſtles were eaſily wrought upon to believe this truth: For when the teſtimony of the Angels aſſur'd them that he was riſen, they were not over credulous, being ſuſpended between hopes and fears: And at his firſt appearance, they were vehemently ſurprized, ſuſpecting him to be a ſpirit or walking ghoſt, till he was pleaſed to give them more than ocular demonſtration *that it was he himſelf*. He appeal'd to the judgment of their ſenſes, *Handle me, and ſee* (ſaid he) *for a ſpirit hath not fleſh and bones as you ſee me have:* (Luke xxiv. 39.) And afterwards more fully to ſatisfy their yet ſcrupulous minds, he ate and drank in the midſt of them. (verſe 43.) And ſtill as a farther confirmation of this matter, he appear'd to them not once or twice, but many times, and not ſuddingly as a flaſh of lightning that preſently vaniſheth, but convers'd familiarly with them forty Days. So that conſidering all theſe circumſtances, 'tis beyond all contradiction, that from the beginning of the world to this day, there never was any matter of fact more ſufficiently and credibly teſtified, than this of the Reſurrection of the ever bleſſed *Jeſus*.

By what power Chriſt *aroſe.*

Being thus fully aſſured that our Saviour roſe from the dead, it concerns us next to enquire into that power, by virtue whereof this wonderful work was effected. The cauſe was God himſelf; for no other power but that which is omnipotent can raiſe the dead. It is an act beyond the power of any creature: And as we cannot hope after death to riſe to life again, without the operation of the ſame infinite and irreſiſtable power; no more did *Chriſt* himſelf, who was rais'd by an eminent act of God's omnipotency. This is excellently ſet forth by the Apoſtle,

Apoſtle, in ſuch expreſſions, as are not to be parallel'd in any author uninſpir'd, *That we may know what is the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in* Chriſt, *when he rais'd him up from the dead.* (Eph. i. 19, 20.) From hence we may perceive that the Reſurrection of *Chriſt* is attributed to God the Father; but at the ſame time we muſt allow, that the eternal Son of God is of the ſame eſſence, and conſequently of the ſame power with the Father, and therefore we may ſay likewiſe, that *Chriſt* by his omnipotent agency rais'd himſelf: This is conſonant to what our Saviour had predicted, when he ſaid, *deſtroy this Temple,* (meaning the Temple of his body) *and in three days, I will raiſe it up.* (Joh. ii. 19.) For *Chriſt* being *equal to the Father, as touching his God-head, tho' inferior to him as touching his Manhood,* was able by his power divine, to raiſe himſelf from the grave. And therefore our Apoſtle obſerves, (*Rom.* i. 4.) That *he was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holineſs, by the Reſurrection from the dead.*

And now to ſum up what is comprehended in the doctrine of our Saviour's Reſurrection from the dead; we may depend on this as a truth of infinite certainty, and abſolute neceſſity, that the Son of God, who was crucified, and died for our ſins, did not long continue in the ſtate of death, but by his infinite Power did revive and raiſe himſelf, by re-uniting the ſame ſoul which was ſeparated, to the ſame body which was buried, and ſo roſe the ſame Man. And this he did the third day from his Death: So that dying on *Friday* the ſixth day of the week, the day of the preparation of the *Sabbath*, and reſting in the grave the *Sabbath-Day*; on the morning on the firſt day of

The time of his Reſurrection.

of the week, he return'd unto life again, and thereby conſecrated the weekly revolution of that firſt day to a religious obſervation, until his coming again.

The Reſurrection *of our* Saviour *an earneſt of our* Reſurrection.

Now is Chriſt *riſen from the dead, and become the firſt fruits of them that ſlept*; the Reſurrection of his body, being the earneſt and aſſurance that ours alſo ſhall be rais'd. *For as in* Adam *all die, ſo in* Chriſt *ſhall all be made alive*; immortality being derived from the one, as mortality was from the other. And therefore, our Saviour calls himſelf, the *Reſurrection and the Life*: For if he were not the Life, the dead could never live; and if he were not the Reſurrection, they could never riſe: And hence he is ſtyl'd, *The firſt-born from the Dead*, (Col. i. 18.) So that all men may be aſſur'd they ſhall riſe, becauſe *Chriſt is riſen*. But for the farther confirmation of this matter, let us conſider thoſe circumſtances which will render the doctrine of the Reſurrection beyond all poſſibility of contradiction. (o.) That God whoſe underſtanding is infinite, knoweth all the men which ever liv'd ſince the foundation, or ſhall live unto the diſſolution of the world. Every particle in our body, every duſt and atome which belongeth to us, is known to him that made us. He which numbereth the ſands of the ſea, knoweth all the ſcatter'd bones, ſeeth into all the graves and tombs, ſearcheth all the repoſitories and dormitories in the earth, knoweth what duſt belongeth to each body, and what body to each ſoul. Again, as his all-ſeeing eye obſerveth every particle of diſſolved and corrupted man, ſo doth he alſo ſee and know all ways

The Doctrine of the Reſurrection *of our* bodies *confirm'd.*

(o.) *Biſhop* Pearſon,

and

and means by which theſe ſcatter'd parts ſhould be united; by which this ruined Fabrick ſhall be recompenſed: He knoweth how every bone ſhould be brought to its neighbouring bone, and how every Sinew may be re-imbroider'd on it: He underſtandeth likewiſe what are the proper parts to be conjoined, and what is the proper *Gluten* by which they may become united. So that the parts of the body of man, howſoever they are ſcatter'd, or whereſoever lodg'd, are within the knowledge and power of God, and can have no repugnancy by their ſeparation to be re-united when and how he pleaſeth. The firſt duſt, of which man was made, was as far from being fleſh, as any aſhes now, or duſt can be; it was only an omnipotent power, which could mould that into a humane body, and breathe into the noſtrils of it the breath of life. And therefore, as our firſt exiſtence was only a real echo to God's omnipotent *Fiat*, ſo will our return into exiſtence be to his almighty *Surge*. For it muſt certainly be as eaſy to that infinite power by which all the world was made, to reduce all our ſcatter'd atoms into one maſs again, and to reorganize them into a humane body, and re-unite that body to its ancient ſoul, as it was at firſt to create this great machine. And he who at the firſt creation could ſepatate the confus'd maſs of matter, into ſo many diſtinct kinds and *Species* of beings, can doubtleſs, at the general Reſurrection, as eaſily redintegrate the ſame matter into its diſtinct and ſeveral individuals. So that we may depend upon the doctrine of the Reſurrection as a truth of infinite certainty, eſpecially when we conſider how the day dies into night, and riſes again the next morning: How the ſummer dies into win-

ter, and revives again out of an annual ſpring: How the corn by which we live, is buried in the Earth, in order to revive and multiply: Our bodies are fed with this conſtant experiment, and we continue this preſent life by a ſucceſſion of reſurrections. And is it poſſible for us then to believe that Man, the lord of the lower World, ſhould never riſe again? Is it imaginable that God ſhould thus reſtore all things to man, and not reſtore man to himſelf? No certainly; when the trumpet of the Archangel ſhall ſound the univerſal *Jubilee*, and call forth the dead from their receptacles; all the ſcatter'd relicks of our mortality will be collected, in order to their being redintegrated into humane bodies, and re-informed with their primitive ſouls.

Concluſion.

And now upon the whole matter: As we ever hope that the ſoul and body ſhould meet each other with any comfort again after their ſeparation; it highly concerns us, to live, while they are now together, in the ſtricteſt obſervance of piety and virtue, which is the only principle of a glorious Reſurrection. Happy is that man, whoſe whole life is a ſhining repreſentation of the graces and virtues of his bleſſed Redeemer! Such a perſon will riſe from the dead with an Angelical glory in his countenance; he will ſpring out of the duſt with a ſurprizing beauty, in order to live for ever and flouriſh in immortal youth! The body which is now exceeding weak and infirm, liable to innumerable paſſions and diſeaſes, ſhall in the twinkling of an eye, be rais'd with a moſt refulgent brightneſs, by the concurrence of an infinite power! For when this dull matter comes to be re-animated with a bleſſed and glorified ſoul, it will doubtleſs derive from it an inconceivable ſplendour; eſpecially when

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our Saviour himſelf ſhall co-operate to *change this vile body, that it may be faſhion'd like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* Wherefore, as we value our everlaſting happineſs, or hope ever to partake of the merits of our bleſſed Saviour's Reſurrection, let us begin on this great Feſtival to *riſe from the death of ſin, unto the life of righteouſneſs*; to purify our intentions from all ſordid allays, and ſubdue our bad inclinations to reſolutions of obedience: That *now being made free from ſin, and become ſervants unto God, we may have our fruit unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life.*

The PRAYER.

O *Moſt powerful, moſt glorious Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus! *who for my ſake didſt deſcend from the higheſt Heaven, to the pains and labours of the Earth, and didſt paſs from a painful life to an ignominious death; from the bitterneſs of death, to the darkneſs of the grave; and by thy divine power didſt raiſe thine immaculate body from death to life again: I give thee moſt humble and hearty thanks, for thine infinite and inconceivable love to me, and all mankind: I acknowledge thee to be my Lord, and confeſs thee to be my God; I adore thy majeſty, and rejoice in thy mercies; I exult in thy marvellous condeſcenſion, and boundleſs benevolence, who haſt not only died for my ſins, but riſen again for my juſtification. O moſt mighty Saviour! be thou ever praiſed and adored by every creature, in Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath, for great art thou, and canſt not worthily be praiſed. O thou ever refulgent beauty of the Majeſty above! Thou brighteſt beam of everlaſting light! Thou life by whoſe genial influence every li-*

ving creature ſubſiſts! Thou light from whoſe reflexion every thing ſhines! and from the communications of whoſe rays it is, that thouſands of millions of thouſands of glorious Spirits preſerve the reſplendent brightneſs ſhed by thee upon them! and all the glittering Hoſts of Heaven ſtand round about the throne of thy glory, ever ſince time was. O do thou make me partaker of the merits of thy Reſurrection! Haſten, I beſeech thee, that long-wiſh'd-for day, wherein I ſhall enter into the bliſsful manſions of thy heavenly dwelling, and behold with joy unſpeakable the majeſty of my triumphant Redeemer. And in the mean time, I moſt humbly entreat thee, to grant me thy aſſiſting grace, that I may from henceforth conſecrate my ſelf devoutly, and entirely to thy ſervice. Grant that my ſenſual affections may always continue in ſubſervience to my reaſonable mind; ſuffer not the treacherous and inſnaring proſperities of the world to emaſculate my ſoul, nor its terrifying adverſities to diſturb or confound my purſuit of eternal rewards. Make me regardleſs of all other objects but thee alone, that ſo after a holy and religious life ſpent in doing honour to thee, I may be partaker of thy holy Reſurrection, paſſing from death to life; from the darkneſs of the grave, to the light of Heaven; from a ſtate of imperfect duty, to the perfection of holineſs; in thy kingdom of glory, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer Jeſus. *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

ALmighty God, who through thine only begotten Son *Jesus Christ*, haſt overcome death, and opened unto us the gate of everlaſting life: I humbly beſeech thee, that as by thy ſpecial grace preventing me, thou haſt put into my mind good deſires; ſo by thy continual help, I may bring the ſame to good effect, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Morning.
Pſal.
Proper.
8. 15. 21

Evening.
24. 47.
108.

ASCENSION-DAY.

Morning.
1 Leſſ.
Deut. 10.
2 Luk. 24
℣. 44.
Evening.
1 Leſſ.
2 King. 2.
2 Eph. 4.
to ℣. 17.

FORTY days being allotted for our Lord's continuance upon Earth after his Reſurrection, for the manifeſtation of himſelf, and preparing of the Apoſtles for their future employment; when theſe days were expir'd, the Apoſtles according to order, with ſome other ſelect friends, return'd to *Jeruſalem*, and there aſſembled themſelves privately, at which ſeaſon the holy *Jeſus* appear'd to them, to take his laſt farewel. There he ſignified to them that they were the perſons, whom he had choſen to be witneſſes both of his death and reſurrection; a teſtimony which they ſhould bear of him in all parts of the World: In order to which, he would after his *Aſcenſion*, pour out his Spirit upon them, in larger meaſures than they had hitherto receiv'd it, that they might be the better fortify'd to grapple with that violent rage and fury wherewith both Men and Devils would endeavour to oppoſe them; and that in the mean time, they ſhould return to *Jeruſalem*, and ſtay till thoſe miraculous powers were from on high conferr'd upon them. His diſcourſe being ended, he led all the company out of the City unto *Bethany*, a little village upon the mount of *Olives*; and this being the time wherein the bleſſed *Jeſus* was to receive the glorious

Our Saviour's *laſt appearance to his* Diſciples.

Morning.
1 Leſſ.
Deut. 10.
2 Luk. 24.
℣. 44.
Evening.
1 Leſſ.
2 King. 2.
2 Eph. 4.
to ℣. 17.

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glorious reward of all his humility and afflictions, and be far exalted above every creature in Heaven and Earth, he firſt laid his hands upon his Diſciples, and gave them his ſolemn bleſſing: After which, he was immediately taken from them, and being attended with an illuſtrious guard and train of Angels, was receiv'd in the moſt triumphant manner, into the ineffable glories of Heaven, where he *ſits on the right hand of God*, where he is advanced to the utmoſt height of bliſs and glory that it is poſſible for a mortal to expreſs or conceive; where he is ſet far above all principality and power; where he is ſerv'd and ador'd, as the only potentate under God the Father, throughout all the heavenly world; where he is worſhipped and celebrated by *Cherubin* and *Seraphin*, by *Arch-angels* and *Angels*; where he is extoll'd in the ſongs of the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*, the *Confeſſors* and *Martyrs*; and where his name is reſounded with everlaſting praiſes and Hallelujahs throughout all the vaſt choir of *the Spirits of juſt men made perfect:* And in a word, where he hath all power given him in Heaven and Earth, and to his all-commanding Will the whole aſſembly of the bleſſed pay a ready obedience. For thus the Scripture declares, that upon his *Aſcenſion*, he was veſted with new dominion over the Angelical world, ſo we are told (1 *Pet.* iii. 22.) that it was upon his *going into Heaven, and ſitting down at the right hand of God, that Angels and Authorities, and Powers were made ſubject unto him.* And again, (*Epheſ.* i. 20, 21.) that *God rais'd him from the dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion,* (*i. e.*) above all Angels of what rank and quality ſo-

His Aſcenſion. And Advancement.

ever; and *every name that is named, not only in this World, but alſo in that which is to come.* But while our Saviour was aſcending by degrees into the manſions of bliſs and glory, his Diſciples look'd after him with no ſmall ſurprize and aſtoniſhment, and as ſoon as they had loſt the ſight of him, two Angels appear'd to them in glorious veſtments, and ſaid, *Ye men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye looking up into Heaven? This ſame Jeſus which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come, in like manner, as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven*; (Acts i. 10, 11.) That is, viſibly, and with the ſame body; when he ſhall appear in the Clouds, with great glory and majeſty. Upon this, the Diſciples were fill'd with a greater ſenſe of his glory and majeſty, than while he was wont familiarly to converſe with them; and having perform'd their ſolemn adorations to him, they return'd back to *Jeruſalem*, waiting for the promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt, which was ſhortly after conferr'd upon them: For ſo the Scripture ſays, That *they worſhipped him, and return'd to* Jeruſalem *with great joy.* (Luke xxiv. 52.) They who were lately over-whelm'd with ſorrow at the mention of their Lord's departure from them, entertain'd it now with joy and triumph, being fully ſatisfied of his glorious advancement at *God's right hand*, and of that particular care and providence which they were ſure he would exerciſe towards them, in purſuance of thoſe great truſts he had committed to them.

His Diſciples comforted by two Angels.

MEDI-

Epiſtle. Acts 1. *from* ℣. 1. *to* 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR ASCENSION-DAY.

Goſpel. Mark 16. *from* ℣. 14. *to the end.*

THE *Aſcenſion* of our bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer *Jeſus*, is a truth of that vaſt importance, that it is not conceivable how our religion can ſubſiſt without it. For if he had been excluded the divine Preſence, there had been juſt cauſe to ſuſpect that God's anger had ſtill remain'd; but *Chriſt*'s admiſſion into Heaven is an infallible teſtimony that God is reconciled. Our bleſſed Saviour in his ſufferings was number'd among tranſgreſſors; he died as a guilty perſon, not only in reſpect of the calumnies of men, but the curſe of the Law, and the wrath of God, which then appear'd inexorable againſt ſin: But having overcome death, and aſcended into Heaven, he thereby proved the innocency of his perſon, and that a compleat ranſom is paid by his ſufferings, ſufficient to juſtify all that ſhall truly accept of it. Moreover, the *Aſcenſion* of the holy *Jeſus* was abſolutely neceſſary for his ſending down the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. The bleſſed Apoſtles had never preach'd the Goſpel, had they not been endued with power from above; but none of that power had they receiv'd, if the Holy Ghoſt in a miraculous manner had not deſcended: And the Holy Ghoſt had not come down, except our Saviour had *aſcended* firſt. For he himſelf when he was to depart from his Diſciples, grounded the neceſſity of his departure upon the certainty of this truth, ſaying, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you:*

The neceſſity of our Saviour's Aſcenſion.

But

But if I depart, I will ſend him unto you. (John xvi. 6.) And beſides this, our bleſſed Saviour went to prepare us a place alſo with himſelf in Heaven; it being only by the virtue of his *Aſcenſion*, that any man ever did or ever ſhall come thither; by whom alone, the *kingdom of Heaven is open'd to all believers.*

The manner of our Saviour's Aſcenſion.

Now the manner of our Saviour's *Aſcenſion*, is tranſmitted to us by ſeveral of the inſpir'd writers. It being ſaid, *He was receiv'd up:* And *he aſcended:* And *he was carried up:* And *he went into Heaven:* All implying the ſame thing; to inform us, that this remove was by a proper local motion, (as one very well obſerves) not of his Divinity (which poſſeſſes all places, and therefore being every where, is not ſubject to the imperfection of removing any whither) but of his humanity, which was ſo in one place, that it was not in another: So that the only-begotten and eternal Son of God, who by his Divinity was preſent in the Heavens while he was on Earth, did by a local tranſlation of his humane nature, really and truly *aſcend* from the Earth below on which he liv'd, into the Heavens above; by which, that body which was before locally preſent here on Earth, and was not ſo then preſent in Heaven, became ſubſtantially preſent in Heaven, and no longer locally preſent on Earth. And therefore, we may conclude, that the holy *Jeſus*, according to his humanity, was really and truly tranſlated from theſe parts below, unto the Heavens above; which is a proper local *Aſcenſion.*

The Place *into which he* aſcended.

But as to the place [n] into which our Saviour *aſcended*, 'tis ſaid to be *Heaven* in the moſt em-

[n] *The original is,* διεληλυθότα τὺς οὐρανὺς, *vul.* qui penetravit Cœlos.

phatical ſenſe of that word, as ſignifying, the moſt glorious place of God's reſidence, where he eſpecially diſplays his ſuperlative majeſty and goodneſs; being *the light which no man can approach unto*; wherein *he who only hath immortality dwelleth*; and at *whoſe right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* When therefore *Chriſt* is ſaid to have *aſcended* into *Heaven*, we muſt underſtand thereby the *Heaven* of *Heavens*, or the higheſt *Heaven*, where the majeſty of God is moſt reſplendent! For whatſoever Heaven is higher than all the reſt, which are call'd Heavens: Whatſoever Sanctuary is holier, than all which are called Holies: Whatſoever place is of greateſt dignity in thoſe courts above, into that place did he *aſcend*, where in the ſplendor of his Deity he was before he took upon him our humanity.

The certainty of our Saviour's Aſcenſion.

We have the certainty of our Saviour's *Aſcenſion* by the teſtimony of thoſe unexceptionable witneſſes who atteſted his Reſurrection, who were likewiſe inform'd of it by ocular demonſtration. And as none could doubt of his being alive after his death, ſo were all aſſur'd of his *Aſcenſion*, which they ſaw with their own eyes: For while the holy *Jeſus bleſſed them, he parted from them: And while they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud receiv'd him out of their ſight*; (Luke xxiv. 50, 51.) And ſo he was *carried up into Heaven, while they look'd ſtedfaſtly towards Heaven as he went up*, (Acts i. 9, 10.) Thus was our Saviour's *Aſcenſion* viſibly perform'd in the preſence and ſight of the Apoſtles, for the confirmation of the reality and the certainty thereof. And beſides this, there was added the teſtimony of two Angels, who ſatisfied the Apoſtles of his reception into Heaven: And no doubt but thoſe bleſſed inhabitants of the

the heavenly Choir, who ſaw the face of our bleſſed Saviour in Heaven, were able to inform us whither our Lord went, when the eyes of his beholders here below could diſcern him no longer. So that we may be infallibly aſſur'd by Teſtimonies humane and angelical, that the holy and eternal *Jeſus*, after he roſe from the dead, did with the ſame ſoul and body with which he roſe, by a true and local tranſlation, convey himſelf from the earth, through all the regions of the air, through all the celeſtial orbs until he came unto the Heaven of Heavens, the moſt glorious preſence of the majeſty of God.

Chriſt's Seſſion.

And now 'tis to be conſider'd, that the Aſcenſion of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour, was in order to his *Seſſion at the right hand of God the Father Almighty*. The expreſſion being metaphorical, obligeth us to conſider what we are to underſtand, both by God's *right-hand*, and what by Chriſt's ſitting there. "God be- "ing a ſpirit can have no material or corpo- "real parts; and conſequently as he hath no "body, ſo in a ſtrict ſenſe he can have no "(*p*) hands: Yet as God is pleaſed to con- "deſcend to our capacities, and not only to "ſpeak by the mouths of men, but alſo after "the manner of men, he expreſſeth that which "is in him, by ſome analogy with that which "belongs to us. The hands of man, are thoſe "organical parts which imply action and power; "by thoſe the ſtrength of our body is expreſ- "ſed, and moſt of our actions are perform'd "by

(*p*) Credimus etiam quòd ſedet ad Dexteram Dei Patris. Nec ideo tamen quaſi humanâ Formâ circumſcriptum eſſe Deum Patrem arbitrandum eſt, ut de illo cogitantibus dexterum aut ſiniſtrum latus Animo occurrat. *S. Aug. de Fide & Symb.*

"by them": From whence the power of God, and the execution of that power is ſignified by the hand of God. Accordingly, St. *Luke* expreſſes it, *Hereafter ſhall the Son of Man ſit on the right hand of the power of God*, (Luke xxii. 69.) The *right hand of God*, includes likewiſe the place of celeſtial happineſs and perfect (*q*) felicity; according to that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore*: Beſides the right-hand denotes eminence, honour and diſtinction, 1 *Kings* ii. 19. And this acceptation and preference of the right-hand may be ſaid to be the law or uſage of the whole earth.

The end and deſign thereof.

Chriſt's moſt powerful interceſſion is the end and deſign of our bleſſed Saviour's *Seſſion at the right-hand of God*; which is a ſolemn addreſs of our bleſſed Saviour to God the Father in our behalf; wherein by preſenting to him his own ſacrific'd body, and by continuing and perpetuating the preſentation of it, he doth effectually move and ſollicite him graciouſly to receive and accept our prayers; and to beſtow on us all thoſe graces and favours, which in conſideration of his ſacrifice God hath promiſed to us. And by thus preſenting his ſacrific'd body to the Father, he intercedes for us moſt prevalently. For his wounds are vocal, and his blood ſpeaks, yea, and not only ſpeaks better things for us than the *Blood of Abel* ſpoke, but alſo expreſſes what it ſpeaks, far more powerfully and ſucceſsfully, than 'tis poſſible for any words to do. So that by the preſenting to his Father his wounded

(*q*) *Ad Dexteram* intelligendum eſt dictum eſſe in ſumma Beatitudine, ubi juſtitia & pax & gaudium eſt. S. *Aug. de Fide & Symb.*

ded body, he makes the moſt moving and pathetical interceſſion for us; the full force and emphaſis of which, no language can expreſs, or thought conceive! He preſents his ſacrific'd body to his Father as a ſtanding motive to prevail with him to be propitious to us, and to crown us with all thoſe graces and favours in conſideration of which he laid down his life for us. So that now all we have to do, is, to return to God, by an unfeign'd Repentance, which if we do, he ſtands engag'd to undertake our Cauſe; and what may we not expect from the patronage of ſo great and powerful a mediator? For how great ſoever our paſt ſins are, his intereſt in Heaven is far greater: How loud and clamorous ſoever our paſt provocations are, his blood and wounds are far louder: And how importunately ſoever our paſt guilts may imprecate the divine vengeance upon us, his interceſſions do far more importunately and prevalently deprecate it. And ſo if we repent, we have no reaſon to queſtion pardon and forgiveneſs at God's hands; if we perſevere to the end in well-doing, we have no more cauſe to doubt of his crowning us with eternal happineſs, than we have to diſtruſt our preſent being and exiſtence. For, *If any Man ſin, we have an advocate with the Father*, Jeſus Chriſt *the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our ſins; and not for ours only, but for the ſins of the whole world.* (1 John ii. 2.) He diſarms the wrath of God, and hinders the effects of his indignation againſt repenting ſinners. And therefore, the *Apoſtle* bids us *look unto* Jeſus, *the author and finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before him, endur'd the Croſs, deſpis'd the ſhame, and is ſat down on the right-hand of the throne of the Majeſty on high.*

The

The PRAYER.

O Victorious conqueror and most mighty king of glory; who hast ascended with great triumph into thy Kingdom in Heaven, and sittest enthron'd at the right-hand of the eternal Father: Grant, I most humbly beseech thee, that all my desires and endeavours may make up directly to that blissful place, whither I most firmly believe thee to have gone forty days after thy Resurrection: That nothing but my body may be detain'd any longer in this valley of misery here below; but my soul and all its faculties may be with thee: That where my best, my most valuable treasure is, there my heart may be also. For what, O blessed Saviour, can be more delightful and desirable, amidst the darkness and distresses of this afflicting sinful life, than to look up to the sweet enjoyment of thee my God? than to ascend in my mind and affections to those glorious habitations, where true joys are to be found? Oh, that my sins were blotted out! my pardon seal'd! that I might be admitted without spot or corruption into the transporting delights of that blissful place; that I might behold the refulgent countenance of thee my Saviour, and receive a crown at the hand of my merciful Judge. For, oh, how happy shall I be, how exquisitely, how incessantly happy! if when this body crumbles into dust, I shall be entertain'd with that celestial harmony and hear the hymns of praise to their eternal King, which myriads of Angels and Saints innumerable are ever singing in full consort? How happy shall I be when I shall make one in that holy Choir, and behold the majestick presence of my Maker, with the spirits of just Men made perfect? *When I shall see thee my blessed Redeemer face to face, and*

and approach that unſpeakably bright, and as yet inacceſſible light, which flows from the ſun of righteouſneſs? In the mean while, O bleſſed Jeſus, *I moſt humbly beſeech thee, Grant me thy aſſiſtance, that while I ſojourn in this mortal body, I may do the utmoſt for which my preſent circumſtances enable me; that though I walk upon the earth, yet my converſation may be in Heaven, and there alſo may be my portion and inheritance for ever, through thy merits and interceſſion, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus. *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

GRant, I beſeech thee, Almighty God, that like as I do believe thy only begotten Son our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, to have *aſcended* into the Heavens; ſo I may alſo in heart and mind thither *aſcend*, and with him continually dwell, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

WHIT-

ACTS CHAP. II.

e Holy Spirit visibly descends on the Apostles.

ACTS 2. Verse 2,3.

And suddenly there came a sound from
wen as of a rushing mighty wind, and it
ed all the house where they were sitting
d there appeared unto them cloven tongues, &c.

Morning.
Pſal. prop.
68.

Evening.
104. 145.

WHITSUNDAY.

Morning.
1 Leſſ.
Deut. 16.
to ℣. 18.
2 *Act.* 10.
℣. 34.

Evening.
1 Leſſ.
Iſa. 11.
2 *Act.* 19.
to ℣. 21.

THE holy *Jeſus* being gone to Heaven, the Apoſtles and the other Diſciples continued for ten days in the moſt ſolemn devotion, but without any extraordinary illumination, till the great Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*. On this day, the chriſtian aſſembly being met together, they all went εἰς ὑπερῶον, *into an upper Room*, (probably of the Temple) for the performance of their worſhip; and whilſt they were employed in their holy duties, on a ſudden, a *ſound from Heaven like that of a mighty wind*, ruſh'd in upon them: After which, there appeared little flames of *Fire*, which in the faſhion of *Cloven Tongues*, not only deſcended, but *ſat upon each of them*. (*i. e.*) There were ſeveral flaſhes or beams of glory, which like bright flames of *Fire*, did cleave aſunder in many places, according to the natural motion of flames, of which every part, as it extends it ſelf in length, grows more *Spire-like* or *Pyramidal*, and ſo divides from the part next to it; and upon the head of every one of the *Apoſtles* did one of theſe divided flames of glory reſt in the form of a *Tongue*, which like a flame grows ſharper and ſharper towards the top: For thus the *Hebrew Idiom* for a *Flame* of Fire, uſes the *Tongue* of Fire, becauſe of the reſem-

The great effuſion of the Holy Ghoſt on the day of Pentecoſt.

reſemblance that is between them. (*Iſa.* v. 24.) Hereupon, they were all immediately fill'd with the *Holy Ghoſt*, who endow'd them with all thoſe heavenly powers, which were requiſite to qualify them for the propagation of the Goſpel throughout the world. They were enabled in an inſtant to ſpeak ſeveral languages; inſomuch, that all on a ſudden, and without any rules of *Grammar* or previous inſtructions, they were heard to[r] ſpeak, to the great aſtoniſhment of their auditors, in the ſeveral tongues of fifteen ſeveral nations. And tho' they were immediately diſpers'd abroad in the world, and ſome of them into remote countries, whoſe names perhaps they had never heard of, yet ſtill wherever they came, they were inſpir'd with the language of the country, which they ſpake as freely as their own mother tongue. The report of this ſtrange and miraculous accident, preſently ſpread it ſelf into all the corners of the City; and there being at that time at *Jeruſalem*, multitudes of *Jewiſh* Proſelytes, *devout Men of every nation under Heaven*; *Parthians*, *Medes*, *Elamites*, the dwellers in *Meſopotamia* and *Judæa*, *Cappadocia*, *Pontus* and *Aſia*, from *Phrygia* and *Pamphylia*, from *Ægypt*, and the parts of *Libya* and *Cyrene*, from *Rome*, from *Crete*, from *Arabia*, *Jews* and Proſelytes; who repair'd to that City partly upon the account of the Feaſt, and partly becauſe of the univerſal expectation of the *Meſſiah* at this time: Theſe and many others, no ſooner heard of it, but they

The gift of Languages.

[r] Ἀποφθέγγεσθαι, *ſignifies more than barely to ſpeak; implying they ſpake each language in its perfection, after an excellent, eloquent, and powerful manner; as from the* Holy Ghoſt, *whoſe works are perfect.* Non Vox Hominem ſonat.

una-

unanimouſly flock'd to this chriſtian aſſembly: Where they were all amaz'd to hear thoſe *Galilæans* ſpeaking to them in their own native languages, ſo various, ſo vaſtly different from one another: And it could not but exceedingly encreaſe the wonder, to reflect upon the meanneſs and inconſiderableneſs of the perſons and their education. And therefore to hear ſuch ignorant and illiterate Men rehearſe the great and admirable works of God, and the myſteries of the Goſpel, beyond humane diſcoveries; and this delivered in almoſt all the languages of the world, was very ſurprizing. The auditors were ſeverally affected with it, according to their different tempers and apprehenſions: ſome were [f] amaz'd and aſtoniſh'd at the miracle; others derided it, and ſaid, that *the Diſciples had drank too plentifully of new Wine.* Whereupon, *Peter* confuted their calumny, by telling them, "That "it was very improbable that Men ſhould be "drunk ſo early in the morning, it being not "above nine of the clock, the hour for morn-"ing prayer; and beſides, according to the "cuſtom of that feſtival ſolemnity, they were "not to eat nor drink till noon. He declar'd "alſo, that theſe extraordinary and miraculous "paſſages proceeded from the effuſion of the "*Holy Ghoſt*, and were the accompliſhment of "an ancient prophecy, the fulfilling of what "God had expreſly foretold ſhould come to "paſs, in the times of the *Meſſiah*: that *Jeſus* "of *Nazareth* had evidently approved himſelf "to be the *Meſſiah* ſent from God by many un-

The Multitude *ſurpriz'd.*

The greatneſs of the Miracle.

Peter's *firſt Sermon to the* Jews.

He proves Chriſt *to be the promiſed* Meſſiah.

[f] Ἐξίσανπο, *They were as in an ecſtaſy,* (the Object was too ſtrong for the Faculty) *they could not fathom the cauſe or reaſon of theſe wonderful things.*

" queſtionable miracles; of which, they them-
" ſelves had been eye-witneſſes: And tho' by
" God's permiſſion, (who had determined by
" this means to bring about the ſalvation of
" mankind) they had wickedly crucified and
" ſlain him, yet that God had raiſed him from
" the dead: That it was not poſſible he ſhould
" be holden always under the dominion of the
" grave; nor was it conſiſtent with the juſtice
" and goodneſs of God, and eſpecially with
" thoſe divine predictions which had expreſly
" foretold he ſhould riſe again from the dead:
" *David* having more particularly foretold, *That*
" *his fleſh ſhould reſt in hope*; *that God would*
" *not leave his ſoul in Hell, neither ſuffer his holy*
" *One to ſee corruption*; *but would make known*
" *to him the ways of life*: That this prophecy
" could not be meant concerning *David* him-
" ſelf, by whom it was ſpoken, he having
" many ages ſince been turn'd to aſhes, his body
" diſſolv'd into rottenneſs and putrefaction, his
" tomb yet viſible among them, from whence
" he never did return; that therefore it muſt
" needs have been prophetically ſpoken con-
" cerning *Chriſt*, having never been truly ful-
" fill'd in any but him, who both died and was
" riſen again, whereof they were witneſſes.
" Yea, that he was not only riſen from the dead,
" but aſcended into Heaven, and according to
" *David*'s prediction, *ſat down on God's right-*
" *hand, until he made his enemies his foot-ſtool*:
" which could not be primarily meant of *Da-*
" *vid*, he never having yet bodily aſcended
" into Heaven. That therefore the whole
" Houſe of *Iſrael* ought to believe, and take
" notice, that this very *Jeſus*, whom they had
" crucified, was the Perſon whom God had ap-
" pointed

" pointed to be the *Meſſiah* and the Saviour of " his Church. "

This diſcourſe, in every part of it, made them deeply ſenſible of their paſt iniquities. They then knew experimentally the diſmal effects of a guilty conſcience, ſo that they deſired of *Peter*, and of the reſt of the Apoſtles, to know if there were any hopes, that ſuch obſtinate ſinners as they, might obtain forgiveneſs of their ſins? *Peter* exhorted them immediately to repent, and for the remiſſion of their ſins, to be all baptized in the name of *Jeſus Chriſt*, whom they had not before acknowledg'd; and that then they alſo ſhould be partakers of the gifts and benefits of the *Holy Ghoſt*, (*Act.* ii. 38.) He likewiſe preſſed and perſuaded them, to ſave themſelves by a ſpeedy repentance, from that unavoidable ruin and deſtruction which the obſtinate and unbelieving *Jews* were ſhortly to be expos'd to, for crucifying the immaculate Lamb of God. The effects of his preaching were ſtrange and wonderful; for as many as believ'd were baptized: there being this day *added to the Church* no leſs than *three thouſand ſouls*. A quick and plentiful harveſt! the late ſufferings of our Lord, the preſent miracle of the languages, the authority of the ſpeakers, and above all, the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, contributing to this numerous converſion.

The Influence it had upon them.

Three thouſand converted by his Sermon.

This day was a Feſtival of great eminency amongſt the *Jews*, in memory of the law delivered on Mount *Sinai*, and for the gathering and bringing in of the harveſt; and of no leſs note amongſt *Chriſtians*, for the Holy Ghoſt's deſcending upon the *Apoſtles* in the viſible appearance of *fiery cloven tongues*, and thoſe miraculous powers that were then conferred upon them. It is called the great Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, from the

Pentecoſt *the ſignification thereof.*

[t] *Greek*, as being *fifty days* from the Reſurrection of our Saviour. It is alſo ſtyled *Dominica in Albis*, or *Whitſunday*, partly becauſe of thoſe vaſt diffuſions of light and knowledge which upon this day were ſhed upon the *Apoſtles*, in order to the enlightning of the World; but principally becauſe this being the ſtated time for *Baptiſm* in the primitive Church, thoſe who were *baptized*, put on *white garments*, in token of that pure and innocent courſe of life they had now engag'd in. The *Greeks* for the ſame reaſon call *Eaſter* Κυριακὴ Λαμπρὰ, *the bright Sunday*, becauſe then alſo the *illuminati*, or *new baptized perſons* cloath'd themſelves in *white*, as an emblem both of that ſpiritual *whiteneſs* and purity of ſoul, which were conferr'd upon them by this *Sacrament:* As alſo of their joy for being made thereby *members of* Chriſt, *children of God, and heirs of the kingdom of Heaven.*

Whitſunday *why ſo called.*

Epiſtle. Act. 2. *from* ℣. 1. *to* ℣. 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR WHITSUNDAY.

Goſpel. John 14. *from* ℣. 15. *to the end.*

THE holy and eternal *Jeſus* having newly converted his crown of thorns, into an illuſtrious crown of glory, and aſcending up on high, having taken poſſeſſion of his royal eſtate and ſovereignty; according to the cuſtom of Princes, is here treating with this lower World by his Ambaſſador: And for the greater ſplendor of the embaſſy, and authority of the meſſage, by

[t] Πεντηκοστὴ *ſc.* ἡμέρα, Dies Quinquageſimus à Reſurrectione Domini.

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an ambaſſador no ways inferior to himſelf, even the Holy Ghoſt, the third perſon in the Tri-une God-head, *in Glory equal, in Majeſty co-eternal:* and therefore moſt peculiarly fit, not only as a deputy, but as a kind of *alter idem*, to ſupply his place and preſence here upon Earth. For ſo he tells his Diſciples, whom he left behind him to aſſert and propagate his authority in the World, *I will not leave you comfortleſs*, (or without an advocate) *I will come to you*, that is, by this Spirit of truth, who is to be my *Vicegerent*, even as I am my Father's. And now, that we may ſtrongly fortify our ſelves againſt all erroneous opinions about this ſublime article of the Chriſtian faith, I ſhall endeavour briefly to explain the name, the exiſtence, and the nature of the Holy Ghoſt, (according to what appears diſcover'd of him in the ſacred writings,) and to conſider alſo the peculiar characters, offices and operations; which (according to the myſterious Oeconomy reveal'd in the Goſpel) are aſſign'd, and attributed to him. *Who the* Holy Ghoſt *is.*

Firſt then for the name of the Holy Ghoſt: To this Being 'tis manifeſt that properly and primarily the name of *Holy Spirit* is appropriated; for the word *Ghoſt* or *Gaſt* in the ancient *Saxon* language ſignifieth a *Spirit:* About the reaſon of which appellation we may briefly obſerve, that there is ſcarce any thing in ſubſtance more pure and ſubtil, in motion more quick and nimble, in efficacy more ſtrong and powerful, than Wind or Spirit. Hence the holy Scriptures, with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do by the ſame appellation deſcribe all thoſe kinds of ſubſtances, void of corporeal bulk and concretion; humane ſouls, all the angelical natures, and the incomprehenſible Deity it ſelf. And to God indeed this name is attri- *His* name.

buted, to ſignify his moſt ſimple nature, and his moſt powerful energy; but to other ſubſtances of this kind it ſeemeth alſo aſſign'd to imply the manner of their origin; becauſe God did by a kind of ſpiration produce them: For which cauſe likewiſe, we may ſuppoſe, that the holy Scripture doth more ſignally and in a peculiar manner aſſign that name to that infinite Perſon which is the ſubject of my preſent diſcourſe. As to the Addition of Holy, he is ſo, both eſſentially, as God; and operatively, as breathing ſanctity into Men by virtue of his perſonal property, and divine energy.

Exiſtence. Now as to the Exiſtence of the Spirit of God; that beſides the Father and the Son, there is a third divine Perſon ſubſiſting in the Godhead, appears to have been a current doctrine among the ancient writers both [u] *Gentile* and [x] *Jewiſh*; and this is more plainly and expreſly aſſerted in holy Scripture; which third Perſon is known in Scripture by the name of the *Holy Ghoſt*. The *Sadducees* did not deny the exiſtence of the Holy Spirit, when they ſaid,

[u] For *thus* Porphyry, *as St. Cyril quotes him*, Ἄχει τριῶν ὑποστάσεων ἡ θεία προελθεῖν οὐσίαν, εἶναι δὴ τὴν μὲν ἀνωτάτω Θεὸν, τὸ ἀγαθὸν, μεθ' αὐτὸν δὲ καὶ δεύτερον τὸν δημιουργὸν, τρίτην δὲ καὶ τὴν κόσμου ψυχὴν, ἄχει γὰρ ψυχῆς ἡ θεότης προελθεῖν. (i. e.) *The divine eſſence extends it ſelf to three Perſons, whereof the higheſt God is the good; after him the ſecond is the maker of the World; and the third is the ſoul of the World; for to this ſoul the divine eſſence extends its ſelf.*

[x] Euſebius *tells us*, Ἐνθεν οἱ πάντες Ἑβραίων Θεολόγοι μετὰ τὸν πάντων Θεὸν καὶ πρωτόγονον αὐτῆς σοφίαν, τὸ τρίτον καὶ ἅγιον δίωσμον ἅγιον πνεῦμα προσκυνοῦντες, ἀποθεάζουσιν, ὅτῳ καὶ ἐφιλίζοντο θεοφορούμενοι. (i. e.) *All the* Hebrew *Divines do acknowledge after the moſt high God, and after his firſt-born Wiſdom, a third holy Power which they call the* Holy Ghoſt, *affirming him to be the God by whom the Prophets were inſpired*, Præp. Evang. *p.* 327.

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There was no Reſurrection, neither Angel, nor Spirit; that which they disbeliev'd, was only the exiſtence of ſuch created ſpiritual Natures, as the Angels and the Souls of Men are conceived to have. And when St. *John* ſaid, *The Holy Ghoſt was not yet*, (John vii. 39.) he meant thereby, that he was not fully reveal'd as he afterwards ſhould be, in a plentiful effuſion of his excellent gifts, tho' from eternity exiſting. The knowledge of the third Perſon in the ever-bleſſed *Trinity*, was a myſtery reſerv'd for the revelation of the Son of God only, before whoſe manifeſtation in the fleſh, and glorification, mankind was not qualified for it. For ſince the great end of the *Holy Ghoſt's* coming, was to reveal to the world the way of Salvation; to diſcover the unſearchable riches of grace, and to make our affections angelical and heavenly; and ſince none of thoſe things could be purchaſed but by the ſufferings and exaltation of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, it was for this reaſon abſolutely neceſſary that *Chriſt* ſhould ſuffer, and enter into his glory, before the *Spirit* deſcended in ſo perfect and ſenſible a manner, as the *Apoſtles* experienc'd it did. And therefore, after our Saviour's triumph over *Principalities and Powers*, he diſpens'd his bounty in this rich donative: And although the *Holy Ghoſt* exiſted from all eternity, yet he was never diſcover'd in ſuch a ſtupendious manner before.

But now as to the nature of this *Holy Ghoſt*, whoſe exiſtence is ſo manifeſt, it is moſt certain that he is a real and proper *Perſon*, and not a mere quality, energy, or operation reſident in, or deriv'd from God the Father, as the *Socinians* erroneouſly imagine. By a *perſon*, we underſtand a ſingular, ſubſiſtent, intellectual being; Nature.

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or (as [y] *Boethius* defines it) *an individual Subſtance of a rational Nature.* Now that the *Holy Ghoſt* is a Perſon, we may be very well aſſured, becauſe we every where find perſonal properties and actions attributed to him. As for inſtance, we are exhorted by the Apoſtle, *not to grieve the Spirit of God*, and *grief* is certainly a perſonal affection of which a quality is not capable. To ſpeak and hear, are perſonal properties, and both together are very emphatically attributed to the Holy Spirit. *When he*, (ſaith *Chriſt*) *the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he ſhall not ſpeak of himſelf; but whatſoever he ſhall hear, that ſhall he ſpeak.* (John xvi. 13.) Again, he is ſaid to *reprove the world*, (John xvi. 8.) And to *ſearch into, and know the deep things of God*, (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.) And to *divide his gifts ſeverally to every man as he will*, (1 Cor. xii. 11.) Now theſe, and the like powers and acts are clearly perſonal; not repreſenting any quality, or energy, but a living and intellectual ſubſtance. And ſtill to render this doctrine more unqueſtionable, there are ſeveral things and actions attributed to God the Holy Ghoſt, as can by no means be attributed to God the Father; which would be very incongruous, if he were only the virtue and power of the Father, and not a real perſon diſtinct from him. Thus the Holy Ghoſt is ſaid to *make interceſſion for the Saints, according to the will of God*, (Rom. viii. 27.) And again, *If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him to you*, ſaith our bleſſed Saviour, (*John* xvi. 7.) And to name no more, *I ſaw*, (ſaith St. *John Baptiſt*) *the Spirit deſcending as a Dove, and it abode on him*, (John i.

[y] Rationalis Naturæ Individua Subſtantia. *Boeth.*

32, 33.

32, 33.) But, *God the Father no man ever ſaw*, (ſaith the ſame witneſs, *John* i. 18.) *Nor* (addeth St. *Paul*) *can any Man ſee him*, (1 Tim. vi. 16.) All which things do neceſſarily imply a true diſtinction, becauſe they can in no tolerable ſenſe be applicable to God the Father. Since therefore not only perſonal actions, but ſuch perſonal actions alſo as cannot be attributed to the Father, are frequently attributed to the *Holy Ghoſt*; it hence neceſſarily follows, that he is not merely the virtue or power of the Father, but a diſtinct principle of action from him, that acts from and by himſelf, and conſequently is a real perſon, or a ſpiritual and intellectual ſubſiſtence.

Having thus clearly demonſtrated (in oppoſition to the *Socinian* error) that the *Holy Ghoſt* is not a mere quality, but a real Perſon diſtinct from the Father; I come now to aſſert (againſt the ancient hereſy of the *Arians* and *Macedonians*) that he is not a created, but a divine and uncreated Perſon. And for the proof of this aſſertion, I need only make uſe of this plain argument. The Spirit of God which is in God, is not a created perſon; and that the *Holy Ghoſt* is the Spirit of God which is in God, I ſuppoſe is diſputed by none: It followeth therefore undeniably that the *Holy Ghoſt* is no created perſon, in as much as that cannot be a created perſon which hath not a created nature; and that can neither have nor be a created nature which by nature is in God. But for the farther confirmation of our aſſertion, we have a clear deſcription of the bleſſed Spirit, That he is the moſt high and eternal God; of the ſame nature, attributes, and operations with the Father, and the Son, as receiving the ſame eſſence from the Father and Son, by proceeding from them both. He is call'd ὁ ἅγιος *The Holy One*, *which*

The Divinity *of the* Holy Ghoſt.

is a diſtinguiſhing title of God. Again, our bleſſed Saviour was *conceived by the Holy Ghoſt*, and by virtue of that conception, he was call'd the Son of God: And the holy Scripture, becauſe dictated by the holy Spirit is ſaid to be Θεόπνευστος, or inſpir'd by God. Moreover, the Divine attributes (ſuch as eternity, immenſity, omniſcience, omnipotency, and the like) do belong as certainly to the *Holy Ghoſt*, as they do unto God the Father. And as all the attributes which belong to the *Holy Ghoſt* are divine, ſo are the honours alſo: For *Lying* to him, is call'd a *Lying to God*; (*Acts* v. 3, 4.) and his inhabitation maketh chriſtians to become the Temples of God; (1 *Cor.* iii. 16.) and divine worſhip is directed to him, both in *Baptiſm* and the *Apoſtolical Benediction*, where he is join'd with the Father and the Son, as equally the object of our faith and worſhip. Now that the Father is a divine Perſon all acknowledge, and that the Son is ſo too, hath been clearly demonſtrated; and therefore ſince the *Holy Ghoſt* is rank'd with the divine Father and the Son, both in our *Baptiſmal Dedication* and form of *Benediction*, that is a ſufficient evidence that he is a divine Perſon alſo. In a word, there is no work either of nature or of providence or of grace ſo ſublime or ſo difficult, which is not aſcribed to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. And therefore, it is very apparent, that this *Holy Ghoſt* (which on this day viſibly, and in a miraculous manner deſcended upon the Church) is no other than the third divine Perſon ſubſiſting in the eternal *Godhead*.

Having thus given an account of the name, exiſtence, nature, and Divinity of the *Holy Ghoſt*, or *Spirit of God*; diſtinguiſhing him from all qualities, energies, or operations, in that he is truly and properly a Perſon: differencing him from

from all creatures, and finite things, as he is not a created but uncreated Perſon; ſhewing him to be of an infinite and eternal eſſence, as he is truly and properly God: I proceed now to conſider the peculiar offices and operations, which are in an eſpecial manner attributed and appropriated to him, in reſpect to us; and our duty and behaviour thence conſequent in relation to him. *His Offices and Operations.*

The offices of this divine Being in reſpect to us, are generally rank'd under the following heads: Firſt, *Illumination*, or informing our minds with the light of heavenly truth; for which reaſon he is ſtyl'd the *Spirit of truth*; *the Spirit of prophecy*; *the Spirit of revelation*, (Eph. i. 16.) inaſmuch as all ſupernatural light and wiſdom hath ever proceeded from him. He inſtructed all the *Prophets that have been ſince the world began*, enabling them to ſpeak the mind of God concerning things preſent and future. By which means it came to paſs, that all Scripture was given by inſpiration of God, that is, by the motion and operation of the bleſſed Spirit; and ſo, whatſoever is neceſſary for us to know and believe, was deliver'd by revelation. Again, the Holy Spirit does not only reveal the objects of faith, but enlightens our underſtandings, that we may be enabled more clearly to apprehend the truth and ſublimity thereof. Our minds are naturally ignorant and prone to error, eſpecially in things ſupernatural, ſpiritual, and abſtracted from ſenſe: Therefore, God out of his infinite mercy doth grant to us the virtue of his Holy Spirit; who, firſt opening our hearts, ſo as to let in, and communicate the light of divine truth, then by repreſentation of proper arguments perſuading our reaſon to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledge, wiſdom, and faith *Illumination.*

faith in our minds, which is the work of *Illumination* and Inſtruction; the firſt part of his office reſpecting our ſalvation.

Sanctification. Secondly, it is the office of the *Holy Ghoſt* to *ſanctify* us; which conſiſts in the purifying our wills and affections from thoſe wicked inclinations and inordinate luſts, which countermand God's will in us, and ſet us at emnity againſt him. He improves the faculties of our ſouls, by ſuggeſting to our minds the powerful motives and arguments of our religion, and imprinting them upon us with all their force and efficacy; and when by theſe bleſſed ſuggeſtions, he hath reduc'd our wills and affections to a ſincere compliance with the will of God, he then ſettles and eſtabliſhes our ſouls againſt revolt and apoſtacy; that ill examples ſhall not draw them aſide, nor temptations prevail upon them; neither inſinuations of falſe doctrine ſtagger them, nor proſperity and the blandiſhments of the world debauch them; nor afflictions and perſecutions ſhake their conſtancy; for they are now *built upon a rock, and though the rains deſcend, and the waves riſe, and the winds blow, they ſtand immoveable* by the ſanctifying influence of the *Holy Ghoſt*.

Exciting *us to good.* Thirdly, it is the office of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to *quicken* and *excite* us in the ways of piety and virtue. For as by his ſanctifying influence, he firſt inſpir'd us with ſpiritual life, ſo he ſtill proceeds to cheriſh and quicken it, whenever he perceives it decay or languiſh. He does not only take up his reſidence in the ſervants of God, but actuates them, prompts them forward in all good actions, helps and ſtrengthens them in their duty, and inflames their reſolution and zeal in all brave and generous enterprizes: He raiſes and draws from their native powers, and conti-

continually ſollicites them with the greateſt earneſtneſs to ſober and righteous reſolutions: And this is his conſtant employment among men, and will be ſo to the end of the world; till *Jeſus* (whoſe vicegerent he is, and whoſe abſence he ſupplies,) returns in perſon from Heaven, to keep his laſt and general aſſizes upon earth.

Fourthly, the office of the ſame Spirit is to *comfort* and *ſuſtain* us in all our religious conflicts, and to inſpire our minds with ſuch joys and refreſhments, as are neceſſary to ſupport us under all the difficulties and temptations we are here expos'd to. The holy *Jeſus* upon his departure from his Diſciples, told them, He *would not leave them comfortleſs*, but would ſtrengthen and bear up their minds, by the ſupporting influence of his Holy Spirit, under all thoſe grievous perſecutions they were to undergo; which made them endure the moſt exquiſite tortures with invincible patience. The bleſſed Spirit fill'd their hearts with inexpreſſible joy, by giving them a fore-taſte of that inconceivable happineſs, which was prepar'd for them, and this wean'd them from all corporeal ſenſations. Thus God, who is the *great Lover of ſouls* (as the ſon of *Sirach* calls him) though he may put ſome men under more difficult circumſtances of becoming good than others, yet he leaves no man under a fatal neceſſity of being wicked and periſhing everlaſtingly. He tenderly conſiders every man's caſe and condition, and proportionably endues them with a ſupernatural power to comfort and ſupport them under the blackeſt and moſt melancholy tribulations. So that according to the merciful diſpenſation of God, all this conflict between our inclination and our duty, does only ſerve to make our piety more illuſtrious, and the reward of it more tranſcendent. Conſolation.

Laſtly,

Interceſſion. Laſtly, it is the office of the *Holy Ghoſt* to diſpoſe and aſſiſt our devotions by his powerful *Interceſſion*. For, *Through* Jeſus Chriſt (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we have acceſs by one Spirt unto the Father*: (Eph. ii. 18.) And, *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhall ask for as we ought, but the Spirit himſelf* intercedes *for us*. (Rom. viii. 26.) We are not able of our ſelves ſo much as to think a good thought, much leſs to withdraw our minds from ſenſe and ſenſible things, and to retire into the divine and ſpiritual world; wherein the life and ſoul of prayer conſiſts. Therefore, as herein we have moſt need of the Holy Spirit's aſſiſtance, ſo herein he more eſpecially operates on our minds. He ſeaſonably warms our cold affections, and inflames our hearts with devotion towards God: He qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, by exciting in us all thoſe graces and affections which are proper to the ſeveral parts of this duty. And when by the weakneſs of our nature we happen to go aſtray, he immediately moves and ſollicites that thoſe ſinful defects may be pardoned and remitted; upon which motion of his, our prayers are continually purg'd from the guilt of thoſe defects, and conſequently introduc'd into the divine acceptance, as pure and innocent, ſpotleſs, and unblemiſh'd devotions.

Motives *to* Practice. So many, ſo great, yea, far more, far greater than I can enumerate or expreſs, are the benefits accruing to us from this moſt excellent gift of God, by him graciouſly conferr'd upon all good chriſtians: for which we ſhould correſpondently endeavour with all our hearts to praiſe and adore him; and in all our lives to make grateful returns for it. Let our duty be never ſo hard, and our natural force never ſo weak,

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we may be *able to do all things* by this all-wiſe and almighty Spirit *who ſtrengthens us*. Let us therefore no longer cry out of the impoſſibility of God's commands, nor charge our diſobedience upon the unavoidable weakneſs of our own natures, ſince it is apparent, that our ſin is reſolvable into no other principle, but our own negligence. If we would but ſedulouſly invite this divine gueſt into our hearts, and frequently implore his aid by fervent Prayer, it is not the united malice of all the ſpirits of darkneſs that can rob us of our innocence; for whenever they aſſault us, we ſhall immediately have the ἐπιχορηγία τῦ πνεύματος, *A large ſupply of the Spirit*; a collation of auxiliary forces; an habitual ſupport deriv'd from that almighty and infallible Spirit, which is abundantly ſtronger and wiſer than they. We ſhall preſently be arm'd with that δύναμις ἐξ ὕψους, that *Power from on high*, or heavenly might, whereby the Apoſtles were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to atchieve their glorious conqueſts; ſubduing our rebellious luſts, and baffling all the devices of Satan. Let us therefore on this great *Feſtival* ſincerely and heartily reſolve to invite this holy gueſt unto us; inceſſantly imploring his aid by fervent prayer, as being the condition on which he is promiſed to be given unto us. Let us hearken attentively to his ſoft whiſpers and holy ſuggeſtions, and comply with his bleſſed motions; ſo ſhall we receive ſuch proportions of his heavenly power, as will ſuppreſs our evil affections, revive our dead hearts, comfort our dejected minds; and change our ignorance into knowledge, our knowledge into practice, and make that practice ſo ſweet and eaſy, that this will be a day of inexpreſſible delight, being ſolemniz'd in the white garments of Sanctification and rejoycing.

Concluſion.

The PRAYER.

O Holy and bleſſed Spirit! who didſt on this day miraculouſly deſcend from Heaven, to ſupply the abſence of the ever-bleſſed Jeſus, *and to inſtruct his faithful followers in all things neceſſary to the converſion of the World: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that my devout conſideration of theſe miraculous gifts and graces may encreaſe the fervour of my mind; and make me always ready and diſpos'd to obey thy godly motions. Infuſe thy grace, O adorable and bleſſed Spirit! and deſcend plentifully into my heart; illuminate my underſtanding, inflame my affections, and ſanctify all the powers and faculties of my ſoul. Make me to* drink of thy *ſpiritual* pleaſures as out of a river; *and let their heavenly ſweetneſs ſo correct my palate, as to leave no deſire, no reliſh, for the tranſitory delights of a deceitful World. I believe that in whomſoever thou dwelleſt, the Father and the Son do likewiſe come, and inhabit there. O! happy, inconceivably happy is that breaſt, which is honour'd with ſo glorious, ſo divine a gueſt: Come therefore, thou ready help in time of need! in much mercy come: Make me fit to receive thee, and condeſcend to my infirmities, that my meanneſs may not be diſdain'd by thy greatneſs, nor my weakneſs by thy ſtrength: All which I beg for the ſake of* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer; who in the unity of thee, O holy Spirit! liveth and reigneth with the Father, one God, World without end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

GOD! who at this time didſt teach the hearts of thy faithful people by the ſending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit: Grant me, by the ſame Spirit, to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort, thro' the merits of *Jeſus Chriſt* my Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the ſame Spirit, one God, World without end. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſal. *proper.* 33. 43. *Evening.* 104. 139.

TRINITY-SUNDAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Gen. 1. 2. Mat. 3. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Gen. 18. 2. 1 Joh. 5.

IMmediately after our Saviour's aſcenſion into Heaven, and the deſcent of God's holy Spirit upon the Church, enſued the notice of the glorious and incomprehenſible *Trinity*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, which before that time was not ſo clearly manifeſted. The Church therefore having ſolemniz'd in an excellent order all the high Feaſts of our Lord, and that of the deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* at *Pentecoſt*, hath now prudently thought fit to conclude theſe great ſolemnities with a Feſtival of joy to the holy and ever-bleſſed *Trinity*. In the explication of which doctrine, I muſt acknowledge, there is abundance of difficulty; for the farther we go, beyond what God hath thought fit to reveal to us in Scripture concerning it, the more we are entangled; and that which men are pleas'd to call an explaining of it, does frequently render it more obſcure: Therefore, with all the brevity I can, I ſhall only offer what God hath thought fit to reveal concerning this myſtery.

The Unity *of the* divine Nature.

Now, we muſt take notice, that the Scriptures do deliver this doctrine of the *Trinity*, without any manner of doubt or queſtion concerning the *unity* of the divine Nature: And not only ſo, but do moſt ſtedfaſtly and conſtantly aſſert that there is but one God: And in thoſe very texts in which the *three* Perſons are mention'd, the *unity* of the divine Nature is moſt expreſſly

expreſſly aſſerted; for, *there are* three *that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit; and theſe* three *are one.* The Nature of God is repugnant to *plurality* and *multiplication* of eſſence; this is a notion wherein the wiſeſt part of mankind did always agree, and therefore may reaſonably be preſum'd to be either natural, or to have ſprung from ſome original tradition, deliver'd down to us from our firſt parents: Thus *Grotius* obſerves, *If there could be two or more Gods, free agents, they might will things contrary to each other; and ſo the deſigns of one be hindred by the other: Now a poſſibility of being hindred is inconſiſtent with the notion of* power and perfection in *God. Ariſtotle* in his *metaphyſicks* defines God, *the eternal and moſt excellent*, or, *beſt of all living Beings.* For as to the opinion of a plurality of Gods, it implies a downright contradiction: For, that God is infinite in Being, is a notion which mankind hath always had concerning him, and to be infinite in Being does neceſſarily ſuppoſe *unity.* For, (to make uſe of the argument of a modern writer) if there were more infinities, *one* muſt be diſtinguiſh'd from *another*, otherwiſe they could not be more; for not to be diſtinguiſh'd, is to be the ſame. And if *one* muſt be diſtinguiſh'd from *another*, then *one* muſt have ſome degree of Being which the *other* has not; for by what elſe can any thing be diſtinguiſh'd? And if *one* muſt have ſome degree of Being which the *other* has not, then to every *one* of theſe ſuppos'd infinites, ſome degree of Being muſt be wanting, *viz.* that whereby they are diſtinguiſh'd: And if ſo, *none* of them would be infinite in Being. Therefore, plurality or multiplicity of infinities in Being, is a contradictious inconſiſtent notion. But beſides this, the Almighty

Prov'd by Reaſon.

And Scripture. himſelf ſays, *I am the firſt, and I am the laſt, and beſides me there is no God.* (Iſa. xliv. 6.) And what can be more in oppoſition to *Polytheiſm?* There can be no other God, any more than there can be two prime cauſes; for all things to depend on one, and that there ſhould be more ſelf-exiſtent independent Natures, is ſtill a contradiction. And again, *Is there any God beſides me? There is no God, I know not any.* (Iſa. xliv. 8.) He who is Omniſcient, knows no other God. Therefore, the *Polytheiſt* muſt reckon himſelf wiſer than the Almighty, the perfection of whoſe Nature does render him incapable of plurality or multiplication. And ſo, the *unity* of God is no more to be queſtion'd than his exiſtence.

Having thus plainly found, that the true and living God can be but *one*, that the infinity of the divine Eſſence is incapable of multiplicity; I now proceed to that doctrine of the *Trinity*, which the Scripture ſpeaks of by the diſtinct perſonalities of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*. We are taught in the Creed of St. *Athanaſius*, that the *Father is God*, *the Son is God*, *and the Holy Ghoſt is God*; *and yet theſe are not* three *Gods*, *but one God:* One with regard to his Nature, but the Perſons to whom this Nature is communicated are *three*. And therefore, as theſe *three* Perſons are but *one* Nature, ſo whatſoever agrees to God, ſimply conſider'd, agrees to them all *three*; being all *co-eternal together*, *and co-equal*. And 'tis farther to be conſider'd, that each perſon in the *Tri-une God-head* hath a different name, and title, and office, according to the different properties and mutual relations of each to other. The *Father* includes the notion of a *Son*; the *Son* that of a *Father*; the *Holy Spirit*, *Father* and *Son* both. And it is yet farther

The notion of a Trinity in Unity briefly explain'd.

ther certain, that not only the name and title of God, but the moſt incommunicable properties and perfections of the *Deity*, are in Scripture frequently aſcrib'd to the *Son* and the *Holy Ghoſt*. So that there is not any thing, which may be truly affirm'd of the *Father* as *God*, but may be with equal truth affirm'd of the *Son*, or *Holy Ghoſt*, as *God*. Thus the *Father* is Almighty, becauſe the *Father* is *God*; the *Son* Almighty, becauſe the *Son* is *God*: the *Holy Ghoſt* Almighty, becauſe the *Holy Ghoſt* is *God*: The *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*, are *God* by the ſame Divinity; therefore, the *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt* are Omnipotent by the ſame Omnipotency. But now, that this plurality of Perſons, does not infer a plurality of Gods, is manifeſt from hence, that the name of each perſon hath a neceſſary reſpect to the other two: If I mention the *Father*, I include the *Son*; if the *Son*, I include the *Father*; if the *Holy Ghoſt*, I muſt unavoidably be underſtood to refer to ſome whoſe Spirit that is: And ſo imply *Father* and *Son* both. Now, in all this, I cannot apprehend any contradiction; for there is ſufficient evidence that this doctrine is delivered in Scripture, and we may be infallibly aſſur'd, that what is there declar'd concerning it, doth not imply a contradiction.

Arguments *to aſſert this* Doctrine.

And now, 'tis to be farther conſider'd, that as there is a number in the *Trinity*, by which the Perſons are neither more or leſs than *three*; ſo there is alſo an order, by which the *Father* is the firſt, the *Son* the ſecond, and the *Holy Ghoſt* the third. Nor, is this order arbitrary or external, but internal and neceſſary; by virtue of a ſubordination of the ſecond unto the firſt, and of the third unto the firſt and ſecond. Now this ſubordination proceeds not from any

inequality of eſſence, but from the inequality of their perſonal properties. For as to their eſſence, they are all of them God, (*i. e.*) infinite in being and perfections; and being infinite, they muſt all be equal, there being no ſuch thing as more or leſs in infinity; and then being equal in eſſence, they muſt neceſſarily be equal in eſſential power and dominion, and conſequently, as ſuch, *none is afore or after other, none is greater or leſs than another.* But though, as to their *God-head* they are all equal, yet in order of nature, and in reſpect of their perſonal properties, the third is inferior, the ſecond ſuperior, and the firſt ſupreme. For the *God-head* was communicated from the *Father* unto the *Son*, not from the *Son* unto the *Father*; though therefore this were done from all eternity, and ſo there can be no priority of time, yet there muſt be acknowledg'd a priority of order, by which, the *Father*, not the *Son*, is firſt; and the *Son*, not the *Father*, ſecond. Again, the ſame *God-head* is communicated by the *Father* and the *Son*, unto the *Holy Ghoſt*, not by the *Holy Ghoſt* to the *Father* or the *Son:* Though therefore this was alſo done from all eternity, and therefore can admit of no priority in reference to time; yet, that of order, muſt be here obſerv'd: So that the Holy Spirit receiving the *God-head* from the *Father*; who is the firſt Perſon, cannot be the firſt; receiving the ſame from the *Son*, who is the ſecond, cannot be the ſecond; but being from the firſt and the ſecond, muſt be the third. Agreeable hereunto is the *Athanaſian* Creed. *The* Father *is made of none, neither created, nor begotten. The* Son *is of the* Father *alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The* Holy Ghoſt *is of the* Father *and the* Son; *neither made, nor created,*

The Subordination *of the* Perſons *in the* Trinity.

ted, nor begotten, but proceeding. So that in a word, the *Father* who *begot*, muſt in that reſpect be ſuperior to the *Son*, who was *begotten*; and the *Holy Ghoſt* who *proceeded*, muſt in that reſpect be inferior to the *Father* and the *Son*, from whom he *proceeded:* And upon this inequality their ſubordination is founded.

And now ſince the doctrine of the everbleſſed *Trinity*, hath by the malice of the Devil, and the envy of weak and wicked men, met with more oppoſition than other Chriſtian doctrines; the *Arians*, *Sabellians*, *Eunomians*, *Apollinarians*, *Macedonians*, and almoſt all Hereticks denying either the Divinity of the one, or equality of all the Perſons: I think it will be very ſeaſonable to conclude my diſcourſe with ſome excellent obſervations out of the Creed of St. *Athanaſius*, which is always on this Feſtival appointed to be read, and which contradicts expreſſly all thoſe Hereſies which the Catholick Church condemn'd in the primitive councils: As to the *Trinity* teaching us, That *we muſt not confound the perſons* (with *Sabellius*) for, *there is one perſon of the* Father, *another of the* Son, *and another of the* Holy Ghoſt, *&c.* Nor yet may we *divide the ſubſtance* (with *Arius* and *Eunomius*) for the *God-head of the* Father, *of the* Son, *and of the* Holy Ghoſt, *is all one*, &c. Not only *the* Father *is God*, but *the* Son *is God*, (which *Arius* denied) *and the* Holy Ghoſt *is God*, (which *Macedonius* would not grant) and yet it does not follow (as the *Arians* pretended) *that there are* three *Gods.* Again, as to the incarnation of our Saviour, it declares, *that he is very God, of the ſubſtance of his* Father (againſt *Arius*, *Samoſatenus*, and *Photinus*) and *very Man of the ſubſtance of his Mother* (which *Apollinarius* denied) *of a reaſonable ſoul,* Athanaſian Creed.

ſoul, (which the ſame heretick diſown'd) *and humane fleſh*, (which the *Valentinians* allow'd not) *and yet he is not Two*, (as *Neſtorius* imagin'd) *but One* Chriſt. *One, not by confuſion of ſubſtance*, (as *Eutyches* held,) *but by unity of Perſon.* Thus much may ſuffice upon this argument, and I hope I have hitherto aſſerted nothing but what is agreeable to the doctrine of the Church of *England*, and to the ſenſe of wiſe and good men. There have been ſeveral who have attempted a more particular explication of this great myſtery, by the ſtrength of reaſon; but after all, it muſt be allow'd, that the particular manner of the exiſtence of theſe *Three* differences or perſons in the divine Nature, (expreſs'd in ſcripture by the names of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*,) is incomprehenſible by our finite underſtandings, and inexplicable by us: Therefore, I dare not pretend to a farther explication of this matter, knowing both the difficulty and danger of ſuch an attempt, and mine own inſufficiency to perform it.

Epiſtle. Rev. 4. from ℣. 1. to the End.

MEDITATIONS. FOR TRINITY-SUNDAY.

Goſpel. John 3. from ℣. 1. to ℣. 16.

The Myſtery of the Trinity exceeds our Comprehenſion.

SInce the Doctrine of the ever-bleſſed *Trinity*, is univerſally acknowledg'd to be a profound and ſtupendious *Myſtery*, and in a great meaſure incomprehenſible to humane reaſon; it is high preſumption in any perſon, too curiouſly to inquire into this ſupernatural truth, which exceeds all our intellectual abilities, and which God in his infinite wiſdom is pleas'd to conceal from us. As it is in it ſelf, 'tis an object too

too bright and glorious for our weak eye to faſten upon! an abyſs too deep for our ſhort reaſon to fathom! It is ſufficient that Almighty God hath declar'd what he thought fit in this matter, and that we do firmly believe what he ſays concerning it to be true, though we do not perfectly comprehend the meaning of all that he hath ſaid about it.

That there is one divine Nature or Eſſence, common unto *Three* perſons incomprehenſibly united, and ineffably diſtinguiſhed; united in eſſential attributes, but diſtinguiſh'd by peculiar relations; all equally infinite in every divine Perfection, and each different from other in order and manner of ſubſiſtence: Theſe are notions which may well puzzle the moſt profound, in conceiving how they agree; but, at the ſame time, ſhould not ſtagger our faith in aſſenting to the truth of them. For, the Doctine of the *Three* glorious *Hypoſtaſes* in the *Godhead*, however incomprehenſible, is never the leſs credible: It being clearly the revelation of God to us of himſelf, whoſe nature is incomprehenſible, and whoſe word is as infallible as a demonſtration. Therefore, that we cannot comprehend this myſtery, is no ſufficient reaſon not to believe it. But now to give ſome plain inſtances, that it is not repugnant to reaſon, to believe ſome things which are incomprehenſible by our reaſon, (provided that we have ſufficient ground and reaſon for the belief of them) I ſhall endeavour in the following particulars.

The Doctrine of the Trinity, however incomprehenſible, is never the leſs credible.

I. Almighty God, is certainly the greateſt myſtery of all others: and acknowledg'd by mankind to be in his nature, and in the particular manner of his exiſtence, incomprehenſible by humane underſtanding. For, reaſon that is limited and reſtrain'd, cannot frame a conception

Reaſon, of what things it is no competent Judge.

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tion that is commenſurate to the eſſence and power of God. This will appear more clearly, by conſidering the myſterious excellencies of the divine Nature. For, who can imagine, or underſtand, how God's immenſity doth conſiſt with his perfect ſimplicity, or that without any parts he doth co-exiſt to all poſſible extenſion of matter; being All here, and wholly there, and immenſely every where? Who can apprehend how his knowledge can certainly and infallibly fore-ſee an event, through uncertain and contingent cauſes? Is it not utterly inconceivable alſo how God could make a beautiful world by a word of his mouth? and to name no more, what wit of man can reconcile the ſeeming difference between his mercy and his juſtice? No ſober man ever doubted of the certainty of theſe things, (becauſe they are plainly taught in Scripture,) though at the ſame time, they are full of depth, myſtery and wonder! And altogether incomprehenſible by a finite underſtanding.

Our impotence with reſpect to things moſt familiar to us.

II. There is many things likewiſe in our ſelves, which no man is in any meaſure able to comprehend, as to the manner how they are done and perform'd: As for inſtance, the vital union of the *Soul* and *Body*, who can imagine, by what means a *Spirit* comes to be ſo cloſely united to a *material Body*, that they are not to be parted without great force and violence offer'd to nature? The like may be ſaid of the operations of our ſeveral faculties of *Senſe* and *Imagination*, of *Memory* and *Reaſon*, and eſpecially of the liberty of our *Wills*. And again, who can imagine by what means we ſo conform our *Voice*, as to expreſs with eaſe what *Word*, and be able to deliver it with what *Accent* we pleaſe, without knowing either the *Organs* of ſpeech, or the manner of applying them? The

parti-

particular manner, in which theſe operations are perform'd, are inexplicable by us; and would be incredible alſo, did not our conſtant experience demonſtrate the certainty thereof.

III. To all which, we may add a great many things in *Nature*, which we cannot comprehend how they either are, or can be: As the *Continuity of matter*; that is, how the *Parts* do hang ſo faſt together, that they are many times very hard to be parted; and yet we are ſure it is ſo, becauſe we ſee it every day. What virtue can we imagine in nature able to digeſt an earthly juice, into the firmneſs of a *Diamond?* And is it not very aſtoniſhing that a *Star*, which to our ſight ſeems but a glittering ſpark, ſhould from ſo vaſt a diſtance diſpenſe its light or image to us? And to give but one inſtance more, who can comprehend how the ſmall ſeeds of things, contain the whole form and nature of the things from which they proceed, and in which by degrees they grow? and yet we are never without an annual demonſtration of it.

Thus we ſee by theſe inſtances, that it is not repugnant to reaſon to believe a great many things to be, of the manner of whoſe exiſtence we are not able to give a particular and diſtinct account. And much leſs is it repugnant to reaſon to believe the doctrine of the bleſſed *Trinity*, the truth of which we have affirm'd by divine revelation, although the particular manner of their exiſtence is incomprehenſible by our reaſon. 'Tis ſufficient the belief of ſupernatural myſteries is built on the veracity and power of God, *That* makes them credible. For, to believe only in proportion to our narrow conceptions, is to diſparage the divine Truth, and debaſe the divine Power. Alas! we are baffled in our philoſophy about the ſmalleſt inſect; and

muſt

muſt we pretend to ſearch into the myſteries of the glorious *Trinity?* And muſt we be buſily curious in ſpeculation about the eſſence of God, daring to ſubject divine Myſteries to our own *Ratiocinations?* Let us then not ſtretch our preſumption beyond the limits of our knowledge to things ſo infinitely exceeding it; but believe the diſcovery that God hath made of himſelf. If the holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, that there is but one true God; if it as manifeſtly doth aſcribe to all the glorious Perſons in the bleſſed *Trinity*, the ſame auguſt names, peculiar characters, and divine Attributes, (eſſential to the Deity;) the ſame ſuperlatively admirable operations of creation and providence; if it alſo doth preſcribe the ſame ſupreme honours, ſervices, praiſes, and acknowledgement to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to ſatisfy our minds, to ſtop our mouths, and to ſmother all doubt and diſpute about this ſublime and incomprehenſible myſtery.

The influence that the Doctrine of the Trinity ought to have on us.

Let us then with all the powers and faculties of our ſouls, magnify and adore the bleſſed *Trinity*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghoſt*; whereby we ſhall have an opportunity of exerciſing a nobler faith, than if we could comprehend it by our ſhallow reaſonings, and imperfect demonſtrations. Let us be content to ſtay for a fuller diſcovery of this ſublime truth, till we are advanc'd to a ſtate of angelick perfection, and come to behold the glories of the *Tri-une God face to face.* In the mean time let us contemplate this wonderful *Myſtery*, which is the moſt proper object of our devout minds, and which only can enlarge the capacities, and ſatisfy the appetites of our immortal ſouls. Let us raiſe our affections from earth to heaven; from temporal objects to eternal; which will be moſt efficacious to the begetting

begetting in us thoſe graces and diſpoſitions, which are indiſpenſably requiſite for the attainment, and for the enjoyment of everlaſting glory.

The PRAYER.

*O *Bleſſed, ineffable, and moſt myſterious* Trinity! *How admirable are thy beauties! how incomparable are thy perfections! how incomprehenſible are thoſe relations of the* Three *moſt bleſſed Perſons, which I believe and admire, and adore, but underſtand not. The Angels are amaz'd in the unimaginable beauties of that glorious preſence, and are ſwallow'd up with the ocean of thy infinity. How then can I, who am in the loweſt order of underſtanding creatures, and have remov'd my ſelf farther from thee, and from the participation of thy excellencies, by a ſinful life, praiſe thee either according to my duty, or thy glories? Yet be pleas'd to accept the humbleſt adorations, and with a favourable and a gracious eye, behold the loweſt worſhippings and duty of thy ſervant. I confeſs and glory in thy Omnipotency; thy Immenſity; thy Goodneſs; thy uncircumſcribed Nature; thy Truth; thy Mercy; and thy Omniſcience. Oh! let me always receive thy bleſſings, and gracious influences, that I may adore thee with all the powers and faculties of my ſoul, love thee with all my affections, and ſerve thee with my beſt and earlieſt, and all my induſtry: That being here tranſported with divine love, and buſied in thy ſervice, and the duties of a holy life; I may to all eternity rejoice, in the beholding of thoſe glories*

* *Biſhop* Taylor.

which

which are above all capacities, above all Heavens, above all Angels: even thoſe glories which ſtream forth from the throne of the eternal God *the* Father, *the* Son, *and the* Holy Ghoſt, *to whom be glory and dominion, honour and adoration, eternally confeſs'd due, and humbly paid by all Men, and all Angels, world without end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty and everlaſting God, who haſt given unto me thy ſervant grace, by the confeſſion of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal *Trinity*, and in the power of the divine Majeſty, to worſhip the *Unity:* I beſeech thee, that thou wouldeſt keep me ſtedfaſt in this faith, and evermore defend me from all adverſities, who liveſt and reigneſt, one God world without End. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalms 144, 145, 146. *Evening.* 147, 148, 149, 150.

ST. ANDREW'S-DAY.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. *Prov.* 20. 2 *Acts* 1. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. *Prov.* 21. 2. *Heb.* 6.

ST. *Andrew* was a native of the City of *Bethſaida*, in *Galilee*, Son to *John* or *Jonas* a Fiſherman, and brother to *Simon Peter*. He was brought up to his father's trade, and followed it with his brother in the lake of *Genneſareth*. He was one of the peculiar and ſelect Diſciples of *John* the *Baptiſt*, who being with him one day as *Jeſus* paſs'd by, the *Baptiſt* told him, that this was the *Meſſiah*, the Saviour of the world. Whereupon, *Andrew*, and another Diſciple follow'd our Saviour to the place of his abode. For which reaſon he is generally by the *Greeks* ſtyl'd πρωτόκλητος, or, the *firſt-call'd Diſciple*; tho' in a ſtrict ſenſe he was not call'd till ſome time after.

S. Andrew's Birth-Place, Kindred, *and* Trade.

He follows our Saviour.

As ſoon as St. *Andrew* had obtain'd the knowledge of the *Meſſiah*, and was confirm'd in his faith that *Jeſus* was he; he immediately imparts the joyful news to his brother *Simon*, who embracing the ſame faith, made haſte to *Chriſt*: and having ſtaid a ſhort time to hear his doctrine, they both returned home again. About a Year after, the holy *Jeſus* paſſing through *Galilee*, found theſe two brothers fiſhing upon the ſea of *Tiberias*: At which time our Lord fully ſatisfied them of the greatneſs and Divinity of his Perſon, by the convincing evidence of a miraculous draught of Fiſhes, which they took

And diſcovers him to his Brother.

at his command. After which, he enjoin'd them to follow him, for he would make them *Fiſhers of Men*; *and they immediately left their Nets and followed him.* Shortly after, St. *Andrew*, (with the reſt) was call'd to the office and honour of the *Apoſtolate*; made choice of, to be one of thoſe that were to be *Chriſt*'s immediate *Vicegerents* for planting and propagating the chriſtian Church.

His Election to the Apoſtolate.

After our bleſſed Saviour's aſcenſion into Heaven, and the deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon the Apoſtles, when they ſeverally determin'd among themſelves by lot, their part of the world to preach in; St. *Andrew* is ſaid to have had *Scythia*, and the adjacent regions aſſign'd him for his province; to which he travelled through *Cappadocia*, *Galatia*, and *Bithynia*, preaching all the way he went. The firſt place he made any ſtay at, was *Amynſus*; from thence he went to *Trapezus*, and ſo from one place to another till he came to *Nice*, where he remain'd two Years, preaching, and working miracles with great ſucceſs. From *Nice* he went to *Nicomedia*, and ſo to *Chalcedon*; whence ſailing through the *Propontis*, he came by the *Euxine* Sea to *Heraclea*, and from thence to *Amaſtris*: At all which places, he met with extraordinary difficulties, but overcame them with an undaunted courage. From *Amaſtris*, he went to *Sinope*, where (as the *Ancients* affirm) he met with his brother *Peter*: But before he left this place, the inhabitants of the City (who were *Jews*) treated him with all the barbarity that the moſt inveterate malice could ſuggeſt; and afterwards caſt him out of the City for dead. But he return'd again, and by ſeveral miracles which he wrought, brought many of them to a ſenſe of their errors, and converted them to the faith.

At what Places *he chiefly* preached.

His barbarous Uſage at Sinope.

From

From *Sinope*, he went again to *Amynſus*, and thence to *Trapeſus*, afterwards to *Neocæſarea*, and to *Samoſata*, (the birth-place of *Lucian*) where having baffled ſeveral *Philoſophers*, he return'd to *Jeruſalem*: At which place he made a ſhort ſtay, and then betook himſelf to his former provinces; firſt to the country of the *Abaſgi*, where at *Sebaſtople*, a City on the *Euxine* ſhoar, he preach'd the Goſpel with great ſucceſs. From thence, he journey'd into the country of the *Zecchi*, and the *Boſphorani*; after which, he removed to *Cherſoneſus*, (a great and populous Place within the *Boſphorus*) where he ſtaid a conſiderable time. At laſt, he went back to *Sinope*, to confirm the Churches he had thereabouts planted, and ordain'd one of *Paul*'s Diſciples (named *Philologus*) Biſhop thereof.

His planting Chriſtianity at Byzantium.

Having thus ſpent a great deal of time in planting chriſtianity in the world, at length he went to *Byzantium* (ſince call'd *Conſtantinople*,) where he founded a Church for divine worſhip, and ordain'd St. *Paul*'s beloved *Stachys*, Biſhop thereof. But, being baniſh'd out of that City by the governour, he fled to *Argyropolis*, where he continued two years, inſtructing the Inhabitants in the Knowledge of the chriſtian religion. From thence he travell'd over *Thrace*, *Macedodia*, *Theſſaly*, *Achaia*, and *Epirus*, till at laſt, he came to *Patræ*, a City of *Achaia*, where he confirm'd all thoſe truths which he had preach'd by his Martyrdom, being condemn'd to be crucified by *Ægeas* the *Proconſul* of that province.

His coming to Patræ *in* Achaia.

The cauſe of his Martyrdom.

Now the particular cauſe of St. *Andrew*'s crucifixion was this: Coming one day to *Ægeas*, (who was then at *Patræ*,) he made his application to him, ſolemnly entreating him to forſake his heatheniſh ſuperſtitions and idolatry, and to

embrace the worſhip of the true God. Whereupon the *Proconſul* derided him as an innovator in religion; a propagator of that ſuperſtition, whoſe author the *Jews* had infamouſly put to death upon the croſs. He likewiſe uſed all the arguments he could to draw over this Apoſtle to worſhip his *Gods*, and to forſake chriſtianity; threatning death if he would not comply with ſuch his injunctions. But our Apoſtle reſolutely withſtood all the impious propoſals of *Ægeas*, who immediately caus'd him to be impriſon'd; and the next day being again brought before him, he threatned him with a lingring and tormenting death, if he would not ſacrifice to his *Gods*. The Apoſtle told him he might do his worſt; for the greater conſtancy he ſhew'd in his ſufferings for *Chriſt*, the more acceptable he ſhould be to his Lord and Maſter. *Ægeas* being then greatly enraged, paſs'd the ſentence of death upon him, firſt commanding him to be ſcourg'd by ſeven *Lictors*; which was perform'd accordingly. After this, command was given, that he ſhould be faſten'd to the Croſs, not with nails, but with cords, that his death might be more lingring and tedious. Then was he led to execution, and being come within ſight of the Croſs, he ſaluted it with this kind of addreſs: "That he had long deſir'd and expected this "happy hour, that the Croſs had been conſe- "crated by the body of *Chriſt* hanging on it, "and adorn'd with his members as with ſo "many ineſtimable jewels; that he came joy- "ful and triumphing to it, that it might re- "ceive him as a Diſciple and follower of him, "who once hung upon it, and be the means to "carry him ſafe unto his Maſter, having been "the inſtrument upon which his Maſter had "redeemed him. Having pray'd, and exhorted the

His preparatory ſufferings.

the ſtanders-by to embrace the true religion, he was faſten'd to the Croſs, (which is affirm'd to have been made in the form of the letter X, hence uſually known by the name of St. *Andrew's* Croſs) whereon he hung two days, teaching and inſtructing the people all the time: And when great importunities, in the mean while, were uſed to the *Proconſul* to ſpare his life, he earneſtly begg'd of our Lord, that he might at this time depart, and confirm the truth of his religion with his death. God Almighty granted his requeſt, for he expir'd on the laſt of *November*, though in what Year we have no certain account. *And* Death.

Epiſtle. Rom. 10. from ℣. 9. to ℣ 22.

MEDITATIONS. FOR St. ANDREW's Day.

Goſpel. Matth. 4. from ℣. 18. to ℣. 23.

TO arrive at the knowledge of that infinite Being, who is the ſum and comprehenſion of all perfection, is certainly a matter of the greateſt conſequence to us, both in order to our preſent peace and future happineſs. To fix our minds on ſuch an object, in which there is nothing but beauty and brightneſs, what is amiable, and what is excellent, what will raviſh our affections, and raiſe our wonder, muſt certainly be an high ſatisfaction; and the more ſo, as it is in order to everlaſting bliſs. And therefore, if I had an underſtanding that could command all the knowledge of nature and art, of words and things; could attain to a maſtery in all languages, and ſound the depths of all ſciences; Knowledge *of* God, *abſolutely neceſſary.*

measure the Earth and the Heavens; tell the Stars, and declare their order and number; and yet in the mean time ſhould be deſtitute of the knowledge of the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who is *the way, the truth, and the life*; all this would but render me like the *Philoſopher*, who, whilſt he was gazing upon the Stars, fell into the ditch; I ſhould but *ſapienter deſcendere in Infernum*, be undone with all my curious ſpeculations.

It excels all other Sciences.

It is therefore abſolutely neceſſary that we ſhould know God, and the bleſſed *Jeſus*, in order to our being happy: *This is life eternal*, (that is, the only way to it,) *to know thee the only true God, and* Jeſus Chriſt, *whom thou haſt ſent.* (John xvii. 3.) The *Apoſtle*, of whom we have been ſpeaking, was confirmed in this belief: For of all the twelve, St. *Andrew* was the firſt mentioned by name to have been a Follower and Diſciple of our Saviour. He no ſooner heard the *Baptiſt* ſpeak of the *Lamb of God*, the true ſacrifice, that was to expiate the ſins of mankind, but immediately he was affected with a deſire to follow him. *He that followeth me, ſhall not walk in darkneſs, but ſhall have the light of life*, ſays our bleſſed Redeemer. The true importance and deſign of which words, our *Apoſtle* very well underſtood: he knew that the only way to be enlighten'd, was to know and converſe with the bleſſed *Jeſus*, and to form his diſpoſitions and actions upon the perfect model of that bright example. All the pleaſures, that this world can afford us are flat and inſipid; but an intercourſe with the bleſſed *Jeſus* is inconceivable happineſs! It is incomparably beyond any happineſs in this world, as being free from all thoſe ſharp and bitter ingredients, which do abate and allay the felicities of this life. There is no ſenſual plea-

St. Andrew *firſt convers'd with our* Saviour.

The happineſs of ſuch a Converſation.

ſure but is either purchas'd by ſome pain, or is attended with it, or ends in it. A great eſtate is neither to be got without care, nor kept without fear, nor loſt without trouble. Dignity and greatneſs is troubleſome: And knowledge (which is one of the greateſt pleaſures of humane life) *is* (in the opinion of *Solomon*) *Vexation of Spirit.* Thus all things in this world, have a mixture of good and evil; but the happineſs of knowing and converſing with the bleſſed *Jeſus* is free from allay and imperfection; there is nothing in it to imbitter our bleſſings, or obſcure our joy: it produces ſuch pleaſures as are manly and excellent, chaſte and intellectual, infinitely more pure and refin'd than thoſe of ſenſe. Therefore, let us imitate the example of the bleſſed Apoſtle St. *Andrew*, who left all to follow the Captain of his ſalvation: His ſoul was enamour'd with God and goodneſs, and expected not its comforts from ſenſual enjoyments; for he found exquiſite delights in the exerciſes of virtue and devotion, and even enjoy'd the difficulties he underwent for him, whoſe friendſhip and whoſe power are everlaſting.

St. Andrew's Example *worthy our* Imitation.

As ſoon as this bleſſed Saint had diſcover'd the *Meſſiah*, he went to his brother *Simon* to impart the joyful news to him, and conducted him immediately to *Jeſus*. This was certainly the moſt exalted charity, and the greateſt kindneſs, that could be ſhewn: For, he inſtructed his brother in the things which concern'd the kingdom of God, and directed him in the way to eternal happineſs. Now this is a duty which every man owes to another as he hath opportunity, but eſpecially to thoſe who are under our care and charge, our children, and ſervants, or near relations; thoſe over whom we

Charity *to Men's* Souls *how exerciſed.*

have a ſpecial authority, and a more immediate influence. When therefore we know any perſon to be ignorant of God and Religion, let us in imitation of this bleſſed Saint's example, endeavour by all means to bring them to the knowledge of their duty, and excite them to the practice of it: Let us, according to our ſeveral capacities and opportunities, labour to make all our friends and relations true followers and ſervants of the bleſſed *Jeſus*, which is the moſt pleaſant and delightful, the moſt happy and glorious work in the World: This is a work of great and ineſtimable benefit to mankind, and for which, many generations to come will call us bleſſed.

St. Andrew's exemplary patience.

Another circumſtance remarkable in the life of this bleſſed Saint, was his patience and exemplary carriage under ſufferings. He valued not the threats of *Ægeas*, neither was the pale conqueror unwelcome to him; for he went to execution with a chearful and compoſed mind. He was not *afraid of them that could only kill the body, but even rejoiced that he was accounted worthy to ſuffer for the ſake of* Chriſt. If ever true courage and greatneſs of mind appear'd in any perſon in the world, it was in this heroick martyr, who with ſuch a generous and unterrify'd mind, defy'd dangers and torments, and own'd and glory'd in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, againſt all the reproaches and perſecutions which the worſt of his adverſaries could load him with. The bitterneſs of his ſufferings made his patience more eminent and illuſtrious! This is an undeniable evidence of the Divinity of our Religion, when we ſee the profeſſors of it look death and danger in the face with an unconcern'd eye. Certainly, no Religion ever expos'd its followers to ſuch ſufferings, nor inſpir'd

ſpir'd them with ſuch reſolution to ſuſtain them. They ſang the praiſes of *Chriſt* (their tongues being harmonious with the affections of their hearts) in the flames; they preach'd him from the Croſſes, and rejoic'd in him as their only good, in the midſt of devouring beaſts. Such heroical and exalted conſtancy muſt be aſcrib'd to the *breaſt-plate of faith and love*, and a celeſtial temper; ſuch invincible faith, as made them not only patient, but triumphant in their ſufferings; as if they had been glorify'd in their ſouls, and inſenſible under the ſufferings of their bodies. They who depend upon their natural powers, or their moſt exquiſite *Philoſophy*, can never riſe ſo high, nor thus abſtract their minds from matter and ſenſe. No principle but that of faith and hope in God Almighty, is capable of ſuch divine operations! Let us then call up all our powers of reaſon and religion: Let us remember whom we have engag'd to follow; and, with all the reſolute perſeverance due to our vows of obedience, ſet our ſelves manfully to *take up his Croſs*, who ſubmitted to die upon a croſs for our ſalvation. By this means we ſhall be taught to underſtand and value the ſufferings of our great Maſter; of which, we ſhould have but a very cold and imperfect *idea*, did not our experience teach us what it is to ſuffer: And the greater conformity to his likeneſs which our tryals work us up to, the clearer and more affecting ſenſe we ſhall have of his infinite condeſcenſion. Since therefore ſufferings and afflictions are the moſt authentick inſtances of our virtue and obedience; let us highly value the honour and dignity of ſuffering for our Saviour, and let us ſoften all our diſtreſſes by this conſideration; that within a little while, there ſhall be a period put to all our ſorrows and miſeries, when

Concluſion.

we ſhall be remov'd from the troubles and temptations of a wicked deceitful world, and be ſafely landed in the regions of bliſs and immortality.

The PRAYER.

O *Moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus! *who, out of thine infinite mercy and compaſſion, didſt kindle in the bleſſed Apoſtle St.* Andrew, *ſo ardent a love of thee, that he left all to be thy true and faithful follower: Inſpire my ſoul, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, with a holy deſire of thee, that I may ſo earneſtly deſire, as diligently to ſeek thee: ſo ſucceſsfully ſeek, as to be happy in finding thee: make me ſo ſenſible of that happineſs in finding, as moſt paſſionately to love thee; ſo effectually to expreſs that love, as to ſuffer any thing for thy ſake with a joyful and triumphant Spirit.* O! *Grant, that all the miſeries of this life, may be render'd eaſy and ſupportable by thy divine aſſiſtance; by the contemplation of thy example, and by the many patterns of conſtancy and virtue, which thy now glorious Saints (but once afflicted ſervants) have in all ages ſet for my imitation and encouragement: That being ſo encourag'd by the bright example of thy bleſſed Apoſtle; ſuſtained by the aſſurance of eternal rewards, and directed in the right way by the light of thy doctrine; I may ſo paſs through things temporal, that I finally loſe not the things eternal; through thy merits and interceſſion, O moſt bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer* Jeſus; *to whom with the Father, and the* Holy Ghoſt, *be all honour and glory, might, majeſty and dominion, now and to all eternity.* Amen.

The

The COLLECT.

ALmighty God! who didſt give ſuch grace unto thy holy Apoſtle St. *Andrew*, that he readily obeyed the calling of thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, and followed him without delay: Grant unto me, and all thy ſervants, that we being call'd by thy holy word, may forthwith give up our ſelves obediently to fulfil thy holy commandments, through the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſal. *Proper.* 105. *Evening.* 106.

St. Thomas's-Day.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. Prov. 23. 2 Act. 21. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Prov. 24. 2. 1 Joh. 1.

St. Thomas's Country *and* Profeſſion.

ST. *Thomas*, (whoſe Sir-name is[a] *Didymus*) was a *Jew*, and ſuppos'd to be a *Galilean*. The ſacred ſtory gives us no particular account of his birth and relations; he was (as *Simeon Metaphraſtes* affirms) born of mean parents, and brought up a Fiſher-man; but withal, very well inſtructed in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

His Call to the Apoſtleſhip.

He was called to the Apoſtleſhip; and not long after, gave an eminent inſtance of his hearty willingneſs to undergo the ſaddeſt fate that might attend them: For, when our bleſſed Saviour was reſolved to go into *Judea*, in order to raiſe *Lazarus* from the dead, the reſt of the Apoſtles were againſt his going, becauſe they ſhould run the danger with him of being put to death by the *Jews*, who had lately endeavour'd to ſtone him.

His great affection to our Saviour.

But St. *Thomas* deſir'd them not to hinder *Chriſt*'s Journey thither, whatſoever dangers they might encounter; nay, (ſaith he) *Let us alſo go, that we may die with him*; intimating, that if it was his Maſter's pleaſure to go, it was their duty to attend him to the very grave. Not long after this, our bleſſed Saviour a little before his ſufferings, was ſpeaking of his departure from them to the

[a] Didymus *from the* Greek *word* ΔΙΔΥΜΟΣ, *ſignifies a Twin; and ſo doth the* Syriack, Thauma. *from whence* Thomas; *ſo that in effect one name ſerves but to interpret the other.*

glory

glory of his Father, telling his Apoſtles that he was *going to prepare a place* of bliſs and happineſs *for them*; aſſuring them alſo, that they might follow him, becauſe they knew both the place whither he was going, and the way thither. *Thomas* ſaid to him, *Lord we know not whither thou goeſt, and how can we know the way?* To which our Lord returns this ſhort but ſatisfactory anſwer; that he was the true *living way*; the Perſon whom the Father had ſent into the world to ſhew men the paths of eternal life; and that they ſhould not miſs of Heaven, if they did but keep to that way, which he had preſcrib'd and chalk'd out before them.

His queſtion about Chriſt's *departure.*

After our bleſſed Saviour's Reſurrection from the dead, and Appearance to the Apoſtles, by which they were convinc'd that he was really riſen, *Thomas* (not being with them) remain'd in his infidelity; and though they unanimouſly aſſerted, that they had infallibly ſeen the Lord, yet he obſtinately refus'd to give credit to what they ſaid, unleſs he himſelf had the utmoſt evidence of ſenſe, namely, *Except he ſaw in his hands the prints of the nails, and thruſt his hand into his ſide, he would not believe.* (John xx. 25.) But the compaſſionate *Jeſus*, who made uſe of all his infidelity to eſtabliſh the certainty of the reſurrection, would not forſake the Apoſtle in his unbelief; and therefore, on the *Lord's-day* following, he re-appear'd to the Apoſtles, who were all met together for the performance of their publick worſhip. And after the uſual ſalutation, *Peace be unto you*, he mercifully caſt his eye upon *Thomas*, and bid him, *Reach out his hand, and put it into his ſide, and his finger into the print of the nails, and* confirm his faith by a demonſtration from ſenſe. *Thomas* having

He refuſes to believe the Reſurrection *of our* Saviour.

He is convinced by ſenſible demonſtration.

having ſatisfy'd his curioſity, and being convinc'd of his error, in a tranſport cry'd out, *My Lord, and my God! Jeſus* ſaid unto him, *Thomas*, thou doeſt well to believe upon this teſtimony of thy ſenſes; but withal, take notice, that it is a much more noble and commendable act of faith, to acquieſce in a rational evidence, and to entertain the doctrines and relations of the Goſpel upon ſuch aſſurances of the truth of things, as are fit to ſatisfy a wiſe and ſober man, tho' he did not ſee them with his eyes.

The bleſſed *Jeſus* having thus in his merciful condeſcenſion ſatisfy'd the ſcruples of this incredulous Apoſtle, he became afterwards (as St. *Chryſoſtom* ſays) invincible in his faith, and went through almoſt all parts of the world, and liv'd without fear in the midſt of the moſt barbarous nations, performing his duty without any regard to his own ſecurity and life. To this Apoſtle (according to the tradition of the Church in *Origen's* time) was allotted *Parthia*, which then contain'd all *Perſia*; and ſome have given us a catalogue of the ſeveral people in that Kingdom to whom *Thomas* preach'd, *viz.* The *Medes*, *Perſians*, *Caramanians*, *Hyrcanians*, *Bactrians*, and *Æthiopians*. The ancients affirm, that in *Perſia* he met with the *Magi*, or *Wiſemen*, who came that long journey from the *Eaſt* to bring preſents to our new-born Saviour, whom he baptized, and took along with him as his companions and co-adjutors in the propagation of the Goſpel. As to his travelling a great way into the *Eaſtern* Countries, as far as *Sumatra*, anciently *Taprobane*, and the country of the *Brachmans*, the diſcoveries made by the *Portugueze* in thoſe parts, ſeem capable of giving a more authentick relation in ſome things, than can be expected from the ancients; partly from monuments

He preached in Parthia.

monuments and writings, and partly from the traditions of the Chriſtians there. They relate, that our Apoſtle came to *Socotora*, thence to *Granganor*, and ſo forwards, inſtructing the people in the principles of Chriſtianity. Then returning, he came to the Kingdom of *Cormandel*; and at *Malabar* (the *metropolis*) he began to erect a Church for his converts, but was hindred by the Prieſts, and *Sagamo* Prince of that Country. But at laſt, by the ſeveral miracles he wrought, he converted *Sagamo* to the Chriſtian faith, who then ſuffer'd his work to go on, and whoſe example was ſoon followed by great numbers of his friends and ſubjects. This much exaſperated the *Brachmans*, who fearing the down-fall of their rites and religion, reſolv'd upon his death; and accordingly at a tomb not far from the City, where the Apoſtle often retir'd for his devotions; while he was intent at prayer, they firſt loaded him with ſtones and darts; till one of them coming nearer, ran him thro' with a *Lance*. His body was taken up by his Diſciples, and buried in the Church which he had lately built, and which was afterwards improv'd into a fabrick of great ſtatelineſs and magnificence.

He converts the King of Malabar.

And is ſlain by the Brachmans.

Epiſtle. Eph. 2. *from* ℣. 19. *to the end.*

MEDITATIONS FOR St. THOMAS's-DAY.

Goſpel. John 20. *from* ℣. 24. *to the end.*

WHEN the bleſſed *Jeſus* was pleas'd to confute, by ſenſible evidence, the infidelity of St. *Thomas*: He, at the ſame time, told him, that he did well to believe the verity and reality

ality of his Reſurrection, when he had ocular demonſtration of it; but *they* (ſays he) *are bleſſed* (in an extraordinary manner) *that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.* The deſign of which words, was to illuſtrate the excellency of *Faith*, without which (ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*) *it is impoſſible to pleaſe God:* For, *he that cometh unto God, muſt believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* (Heb. xi. 6.) Now, the general notion of Faith is this: (*) That it is an aſſent to that which is *credible*, as *credible.* Now, that is properly *credible*, which is not apparent of it ſelf, nor certainly to be collected, either antecedently by its cauſe, or reverſely by its effect; and yet, (though by none of theſe ways) hath the atteſtation of a truth. For, thoſe things which are apparent of themſelves, are either ſo in reſpect of our ſenſe, as that ſnow is white, and fire is hot; or in reſpect of our underſtanding, as that the whole of any thing is greater than any one part of the whole; that every thing imaginable either is, or is not. Now, theſe things are not ſaid properly to be believ'd, but to be known, becauſe they are evident both to our ſenſe and underſtanding. Again, other things, tho' not immediately apparent in themſelves, may yet appear moſt certain and evidently true, by an immediate and neceſſary connexion with ſomething formerly known. For, being every natural cauſe actually applied, doth neceſſarily produce its own natural effect, and every natural effect wholly dependeth upon, and abſolutely pre-ſuppoſeth its own proper cauſe; therefore, there muſt be an immediate connexion between the cauſe and its effect. From

The nature of Faith *defin'd.*

* *Biſhop* Pearſon.

whence

whence it follows, that if the connexion be once clearly perceiv'd, the effect will be known in the cauſe, and the cauſe by the effect. And by theſe ways, proceeding from principles evidently known, by conſequences certainly concluding, we come to the knowledge of propoſitions in *Mathematicks*, and concluſions in other *Sciences*; which propoſitions and concluſions are not ſaid to be *credible*, but *ſcientifical*; and the comprehenſion of them is not *Faith* but *Science*. But when any thing propounded to us, is neither apparent to our ſenſe, nor evident to our underſtanding, in and of it ſelf; neither certainly to be collected from any clear and neceſſary connexion with the cauſe from which it proceedeth, or the effects which it naturally produceth, and yet notwithſtanding, appeareth to us true, (not by a manifeſtation, but atteſtation of the truth) and ſo moveth us to aſſent not of it ſelf, but by virtue of the teſtimony given to it; this is ſaid properly to be *credible*, and an aſſent unto this, upon ſuch *credibility*, is in the proper notion *Faith* or Belief. *And illuſtrated.*

Having thus defined and illuſtrated the nature of *Faith* in general; it will be farther neceſſary to obſerve, that there is a two-fold *Faith*, diſtinguiſh'd by this double object, a human, and divine *Faith*. Human *Faith* is an aſſent unto any thing *credible*, merely upon the teſtimony of man. It is by virtue of this human *Faith*, that we doubt not at all of thoſe things which we never ſaw, by reaſon of their diſtance from us, either by time or place: For inſtance, who doubts whether there be ſuch an Iſland as *Jamaica*, tho' he never paſs'd any of our four Seas? Or, who pretends to deny that *Cæſar* conquer'd *Pompey*, or that *Titus* ſucceeded *Veſpaſian*, tho' both are beyond the poſſibility of the know- *Human Faith.*

ledge of man? Upon this kind of *Faith* alſo we proceed in the ordinary affairs of our life; there is no juſtice executed, no commerce maintained, no buſineſs proſecuted, without this human *Faith*, grounded upon the teſtimony of man.

Divine Faith.

Divine *Faith* is an aſſent unto ſomething as *credible* upon the teſtimony of God. This aſſent is the higheſt kind of *Faith*, becauſe the object hath the higheſt *credibility*, being grounded upon the teſtimony of God, which is infallible. He is of that univerſal knowledge, and infinite wiſdom, that it is impoſſible he ſhould be deceived; of that indefectible holineſs, and tranſcendent rectitude, that it is not imaginable he ſhould intend to deceive any man; and conſequently, whatſoever he hath deliver'd for a truth, muſt be neceſſarily and infallibly true. That truth then which is teſtify'd by God, hath a divine *Credibility*; and an aſſent unto it as ſo *credible*, is divine *Faith*.

Divine Revelation, *the nature of it.*

Now, the teſtimony of God is given by way of *Revelation*, which is of two kinds, either immediate, or mediate. An immediate *Revelation* is that by which God delivereth himſelf to man by himſelf, without the intervention of man. A mediate *Revelation* is the conveyance of the counſel of God unto man by man. By the firſt, he ſpake unto the *Prophets*; by the ſecond, in the *Prophets*; and by them unto us. So that what the *Prophets* deliver'd, was not the teſtimony of man, but of God deliver'd by man. It was *he* who *ſpake by the mouth of his holy Prophets which have been ſince the world began.* (Luke i. 70.) All *prophetical Revelations* came from God originally, and whoſoever firſt deliver'd them to man, was antecedently inſpired by God.

Thus God, who at ſundry times, and in divers manners ſpake in times paſt unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in theſe laſt days ſpoken unto us by his Son. (Heb. i. 1, 2.) who reveal'd the will of God to the *Apoſtles*; and they being aſſur'd that he knew all things, and convinc'd that he came forth from the Father, gave a full and clear aſſent unto thoſe things which he deliver'd; and grounded their *Faith* upon his words, as upon the immediate teſtimony of God. Thus the *Apoſtles* believ'd on *Chriſt* through his own word, and the *primitive Chriſtians* believed on the ſame *Chriſt* through the *Apoſtles* word: So that the *Faith* of thoſe who were converted by the *Apoſtles*, was an aſſent unto the word, as *credible* upon the teſtimony of God, deliver'd to them by a teſtimony *Apoſtolical*. But when the *Apoſtles* themſelves departed out of this life, they left the ſum of what they had received in writing, for the continuation and propagation of the Chriſtian *Faith*. And ſo thoſe *Chriſtians* which lived ſince the *Apoſtles* death, have believ'd the wrirings of *Moſes*, and the *Prophets*, of the *Apoſtles* and *Evangeliſts*; for ſince they were endued with miraculous power from above, and inſpir'd with the *Holy Ghoſt*, and conſequently what they deliver'd was not the word of man, but of God himſelf; we may as readily and ſtedfaſtly aſſent unto them, as to any thing we ſee or know. In a word, there are ſuch clear characters of the divine Hand to render the holy Scriptures authoritative, that to deny them to be true, is to make God a lyar.

Faith *is built on* Divine Revelation.

The ſum of this is: He that profeſſeth himſelf a Chriſtian, profeſſeth to entertain the doctrine of *Chriſt*, to believe all that God hath revealed to us; to aſſent to all the articles of the

The neceſſity of Faith.

chriſtian *Faith:* to all the precepts, promiſes, and threatnings of the Goſpel. Now, the great deſign, and the proper intention of this doctrine, is to take men off from ſin, and to direct and encourage them to a holy life. It teacheth us what we are to believe concerning *God* and *Chriſt*, not with any deſign to entertain our minds with the bare ſpeculation of thoſe truths, but to better our lives: For every article of our *Faith* is a proper argument againſt ſin, and a powerful motive to obedience. How can any reaſonable creature believe that eternal damnation ſhall be the puniſhment of vice, and yet live in the wilful practice of it? How can any one, who firmly believes that the pleaſures of ſin are fatal, be tempted by thoſe allurements, to venture on that which will undoubtedly bring death to the ſoul? And on the other hand, what more powerful motive can be conceived to make us holy, than to believe that our bountiful Maſter will reward his true and faithful ſervants with immortal joys? That for a few moments ſpent here in the practice of a holy life, we ſhall be admitted into the perpetual ſociety and friendſhip of all the bleſſed inhabitants of thoſe glorious manſions above, where we ſhall with exact and perfect harmony, ſing everlaſting ſongs of praiſe to the Almighty for all his works of wonder; for the effects of that infinite goodneſs, and admirable wiſdom, and almighty power, which are clearly ſeen in the creation, government and redemption of the world? From hence we may eaſily perceive, that every vice which rules among us, and ſullies the beauty of our ſouls, can be attributed to nothing but *Infidelity*. For, ſince God hath threatned ſuch miſeries to the workers of iniquity, and promis'd ſuch exquiſite pleaſures to thoſe that love and fear him; it is impoſſible we

Faith *and* good-works *inſeparable.*

we ſhould not be deeply affected with them, if we ſeriouſly believe them; and he hath given us ſuch evidence of their truth, that it is impoſſible we ſhould not believe them, unleſs the *God of this world hath blinded our minds.* So that if men will obſtinately and wilfully remain in their *Infidelity*, and not ſpeedily entertain ſuch a Belief as will render them obſequious to the Goſpel, there is no remedy. *Pertinaciæ nullum Remedium poſuit Deus*, God has provided no remedy for the obſtinacy of Men; if they will chuſe to be fools, and to be miſerable, he will leave them to inherit their own choice, and to enjoy the portion of ſinners.

The PRAYER.

O *Eternal God! Fountain of all truth and holineſs, in whom to believe is life eternal: Let thy grace, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, deſcend with a mighty power into my ſoul, that the commemoration of this bleſſed Apoſtle's infidelity, may make me take warning by his example, and that the revelations thou haſt been pleas'd to make of thy ſelf, may cauſe me conſtantly to acknowledge thee to be* my Lord and my God, *and my ſelf a ſervant of the ever-bleſſed* Jeſus. *Thou,* Lord! *who hadſt compaſſion on the ignorance and infirmity of St.* Thomas, *and by his Frailties didſt magnify thy mercy, in bringing him to a full aſſurance of thy Son's reſurrection; give me grace likewiſe to improve all thy diſpenſations unto my ſpiritual advantage, that when I ſtand, I may take heed leſt I fall; and that when I fall, I may endeavour to riſe. For, if I have any good diſpoſition, I firmly believe 'tis by the aſſiſtance of thy divine grace; if I have perſevered in doing well, it is becauſe thy ſtrength enabled me; if I fell off from a good courſe, it was*

becauſe thy grace did not preſerve me; and in each of theſe relapſes I had lain, and been loſt for ever, had not thy mighty hand rais'd me out of the duſt. So full of mercy are all thy ways, O God! *which I now plainly perceive, and have a deep and grateful ſenſe of; and I am even loſt in wonder and amazement at the innumerable favours thou haſt vouchſafed me, and all thy faithful ſervants. O keep me ſtedfaſt in this faith, and conform me to the image of thy* Chriſt, *on whom I believe; that ſo at the laſt, I may receive the end of my faith, even the ſalvation of my ſoul, by the ſame* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty and ever-living God, who for the more confirmation of the faith, didſt ſuffer thy holy Apoſtle *Thomas* to be doubtful in thy Son's reſurrection: Grant me ſo perfectly, and without all doubt, to believe in thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, that my faith in thy ſight may never be reproved. Hear me, O Lord! through the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. *Amen.*

THE

ACTS CHAP. IX.

The Conversion of St. Paul.

ACTS 9. Verse. 3. 4.

And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven. And he fell to the earth, & heard a voice, saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?

Morning. Pſalm 119. *Par.*
Evening. 119. *Par.*

THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Wiſd.* 5. 2. *Act.* 22. to *v.* 22.
Evening. 1 Leſſ. *Wiſd.* 6. 2. *Acts* 26.

ST. *Paul* was born in a rich and populous City call'd *Tarſus* in *Cilicia*, above three hundred miles from *Jeruſalem*. His parents were both *Jews*, and of the tribe of *Benjamin*, ſo that he was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; firſt enter'd in the occupation of tent-making, then educated in the learning of his City, and afterwards remov'd to *Jeruſalem*, where he became a ſcholar to the great *Rabban Gamaliel*, and one of the moſt zealous of the ſect of the *Phariſees*. With the fiery genius of this ſect, our Apoſtle was deeply tinctured, which made him a zealous perſecutor of the Saints. His falſe zeal tranſported him even to folly and madneſs; he broke open houſes, and ſeiz'd upon any who look'd like a Diſciple of the crucified *Jeſus*, compelling men to blaſpheme God, and breathing out nothing but threatnings and ſlaughter wherever he came. By this means, there was a ſad and grievous perſecution, and *Paul* was one of the moſt active inſtruments in it; ſo that it diſpers'd in a great meaſure the whole body of the Church, and drove many natives of *Jeruſalem* from their own houſes into foreign parts. And having thus miſerably perſecuted the poor Chriſtians at *Jeruſalem*, he was ſo inſatiable in his fury, that he addreſſed himſelf to the *Sanhedrim*; and thence took out a warrant and commiſſion to go down and

St. Paul's birth-place, parentage, and education.

His cruel diſpoſition.

His violent perſecution of the Church.

ranſack the Synagogues at *Damaſcus*; and that if he found any who profeſs'd *Chriſt*, he might bring them bound to be puniſh'd at *Jeruſalem*.

His Journey to Damaſcus.

Paul being thus arm'd with a commiſſion, went full of rage to *Damaſcus*, breathing out vengeance and deſtruction againſt the poor Chriſtians. But God Almighty put a ſtop to his violent deſigns: For, while he was, (together with his cruel aſſociates,) upon the road, almoſt at their journey's end, on a ſudden, at mid-day, a moſt refulgent light, beyond the ſplendor and brightneſs of the ſun, was darted from Heaven upon them; whereat, being ſtrangely amaz'd and confounded, both he and his companions immediately fell flat on the ground. And at the ſame time, a voice from Heaven was directed to him, ſaying, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* Whereupon, he cried out, (being under a great Aſtoniſhment!) *Who art thou, Lord!* The voice replied, *I am* Jeſus *of* Nazareth, *whom thou perſecuteſt*; *It is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks.* (i. e.) All thy attempts to extirpate the belief in Me, will prove ſucceſsleſs; and like kicking againſt ſpikes, will prove thy own wounding and torment. *Paul* being convinc'd of his folly, preſently ſubmitted to the divine viſion, and with the moſt entire reſignation, ſaid, *Lord! what wilt thou have me to do?* Whereupon, he was bid to riſe and go to *Damaſcus*, and there expect what ſhould be farther reveal'd to him. Riſing from the ground, he found his ſight gone by the extraordinary brightneſs of the light, and in this condition being led by his companions to *Damaſcus*, to the houſe of *Judas*, he was there three days faſting and praying. At this time, we may probably ſuppoſe it was, that he had that viſion and ecſtaſy, wherein he was taken up into the *Third Heaven*; where he ſaw things

His miraculous Converſion.

And Blindneſs.

Is carried into the third Heaven, *when* (probably.)

things great and unutterable, and was fully instructed in the myſteries of the Goſpel, which gave him occaſion to ſay, that he was not *taught the Goſpel which he preached by Man, but by the revelation of* Jeſus Chriſt. Three days being expir'd, God Almighty appeared to *Ananias* in a viſion; commanding him to go unto *Saul* of *Tarſus*, and lay his hands upon him, that he might receive his ſight. *Ananias* at firſt was greatly ſurpriz'd, fearing to throw himſelf into the hands of that bloody perſecutor: But our Lord, to take off his fears, told him, that he miſtook the man, that he had now taken him to be a *choſen Veſſel*, to preach the Goſpel both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and before the greateſt Potentates upon earth. *Ananias* ſatisfied with this account, repair'd to the Houſe where *Saul* was, and laying his hands upon him, told him that the Lord had ſent him to him, that he might receive his ſight, and be fill'd with the *Holy Ghoſt*; which was no ſooner done, but his ſight was reſtor'd to him. And the next thing he did was to be baptized, and ſolemnly initiated into the chriſtian faith: He was made a ſelect member of the Church, to the great joy of the reſt of the Diſciples, that he ſhould not only become a profeſſor, but a preacher of the Goſpel, which he had ſo lately ſought to deſtroy. And from that time forward, he boldly aſſerted that *Jeſus* was the *Chriſt*, the Son of God, and prov'd it to the *Jews* with ſuch divine atteſtations, that they were overwhelm'd with evidence, and could not anſwer him.

Ananias is ſent to comfort him.

His ſight reſtor'd.

His being baptized.

And preaching Chriſt.

St. *Paul*, though not of the twelve; yet for his extraordinary eminence in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, had the honour of being ſtyl'd an *Apoſtle*. He wrote fourteen Epiſtles full of excellent Inſtructions, which have been received by

by the Church in all ages. We find him in Scripture deſcrib'd by two names, *Saul* and *Paul*; the one *Hebrew*, relating to his *Jewiſh* original; the other *Latin*, aſſum'd by him (as ſome think) at his *Converſion*, to denote his humility; as others, in memory of his converting *Sergius Paulus* the *Roman* governor. As to the travels of this Apoſtle in the purſuance of his miniſtry, from the time of his *Converſion* to his death; together with the moſt principal tranſactions and the ſeveral Accidents that happen'd to him therein, they are recorded in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and in Dr. *Cave's Antiquitates Apoſtolicæ*; to which, the ſequel of his life may not be unfitly referr'd. He was beheaded at the *Aquæ Salviæ*, three miles from *Rome*, about the eighth or ninth year of *Nero's* Reign.

His Death.

For the *Epiſtle*. Act. 9. *to* ✝ 23.

MEDITATIONS For the CONVERSION of St. PAUL.

Goſpel. Mat. 19. *from* ✝ 27, *to the end*.

AMongſt the various methods that have been made uſe of, to reclaim ſinners from their evil ways, and to bring them to the wiſdom of the juſt, there is none more powerful than the conſideration of the aſtoniſhing patience and long-ſuffering of God towards us, in the midſt of our innumerable provocations. His great mercy and pity declar'd to us, in all thoſe gracious means and methods which he uſeth for our recovery, muſt needs be pregnant of unſpeakable conſolation; beget the moſt amiable notions of him in our minds, and conſequently be

God's Mercy *a motive to* Obedience.

a

a mighty encouragement to ſinners to repent and amend. All God's attributes of power, and wiſdom, and holineſs, are exceeding lovely; but this of his mercy in forgiving ſins, is abundantly more engaging; becauſe it at once relieves our miſery, and tends to our everlaſting benefit. When men ſincerely and heartily repent of their ſins, and reſolve to walk in the commandments of their God, the divine goodneſs finds out many arguments of pity; for he conſiders he made them fallible creatures, that he gave them not the bright and piercing intellects of Angels; and therefore when they begin to take hold of the means of grace, he is infinitely pleas'd with it, and would by no means have them periſh. To this purpoſe, he ſwears, *As I live, ſaith the Lord God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O houſe of* Iſrael? (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) Certainly, this is enough to convince the minds of men, that it is their intereſt, as well as their duty, to forſake ſin, and to adhere to God, ſince there is nothing wanting but their own endeavours in order to their *Converſion*.

He pardons all Sin upon repentance.

God Almighty hath not been wanting to give many miraculous inſtances of his grace and mercy even to the chiefeſt of ſinners; to the end that none might deſpair; and for want of the encouragement of an example equal to their own caſe, be diſhearten'd from a vigorous reſolution upon a better courſe. Some have been ſnatch'd as fire-brands out of the fire; and that in ſo ſtrange a manner, that it wou'd even amaze a man to think of the wonder of their recovery: Thoſe who have ſunk themſelves into the very depth of infidelity and wickedneſs, have by a mighty hand and out-ſtretch'd arm, been pluck'd out

Sinners, whence the greateſt to be encouraged to repent.

out of this horrible pit. St. *Paul* is an inſtance at leaſt equal to any of thoſe we meet with in Scripture, both for the heinouſneſs of the offender, and the miracle of his change: and therefore his *Converſion* ought to be regarded with the greateſt joy and attention. He was one of the moſt zealous perſecutors of the chriſtian Church, inſomuch, as when the *Jews* were reſolv'd to do execution upon St. *Stephen*, he ſtood by, and kept the clothes of them that did it. Accordingly, we find him indicting himſelf for this fact; and pleading guilty. *When the blood of thy Martyr* Stephen *was ſhed, I* (ſaith he, with ſorrow after his *Converſion*) *was ſtanding by, conſented to his death, and kept the Raiment of them that ſlew him*, (Acts. xxii. 20.) Of all the inquiſitors employed by the *Sanhedrim*, to execute their warrants upon thoſe up-ſtart *Hereticks* (as they call'd them) who preach'd againſt the law of *Moſes*, and the tradition of the *Fathers*; our Apoſtle was the principal agent: Nay, he was ſo earneſt to vindicate and aſſert the Divinity of the *Moſaick* diſpenſation, that his zeal began to ferment, and to boil up into *Paroxyſms* of indignation, and he perſecuted all of a contrary way with uncommon fury. But God Almighty, out of his infinite wiſdom and *Philanthropy*, miraculouſly recover'd him from the death of ſin, and he afterwards became a man, in whom the divine life did eminently manifeſt and diſplay it ſelf: He lived piouſly and devoutly, ſoberly and temperately, juſtly and righteouſly, careful *always to keep a conſcience void of offence, both towards God and Man.* He dedicated himſelf (from the time of his *Converſion*) entirely to his God and Saviour; and was indefatigably induſtrious to bring men over to the knowledge of the truth; to reduce them out of the crooked paths of vice and

St. Paul's *flagitious life before his* Converſion.

His admirable Virtues *and* Piety *afterwards.*

and idolatry, and to ſet them in the right way to eternal life. All the dangers and difficulties, the innumerable troubles and oppoſitions that he met with in the propagation of the Goſpel, did but reflect the greater luſtre upon his patience, whereof indeed he became a moſt eminent pattern and exemplar; enduring the ſevereſt calamities and perſecutions, with a patience triumphant and unconquerable. He who was once wrathful, reproachful, and ungovernable, became [a] with a few words of God, as a lamb; and altho' in every ſuffering he was a *Martyr*, and therefore might have fill'd many *Martyrologies* with his ſufferings, yet he underwent all for the ſake of his great Maſter, with a ſoul calm and ſerene. When his death approach'd, he joyfully declar'd, that he had *fought a good fight*; he had *finiſhed his courſe*; he had *kept the faith*; and ſo indeed he had, kept it inviolably, undauntedly, to the laſt minute of his life. Now, can any Perſon forbear admiring and adoring the ineſtimable riches of God's grace, which diſplays it ſelf, in a manner ſo aſtoniſhing and illuſtrious? To preſerve thoſe that are in health, is valuable; but to recover the ſick, and eſpecially to raiſe the dead, is admirable. To preſerve a man innocent among the various temptations of a deceitful

An illuſtration of the divine goodneſs.

[a] Da mihi virum qui ſit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus; pauciſſimis dei verbis tam placidum quàm ovem reddam. Da cupidum, avarum, tenacem; jam tibi eum liberalem dabo, & pecuniam ſuam plenis manibus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mortis; jam cruces & ignes & taurum contemnet. Da libidinoſum, adulterum, ganeonem; jam ſobrium, caſtum, continentem, videbis. Da crudelem & ſanguinis appetentem, jam in veram clementiam furor ille mutabitur. Da injuſtum, inſipientem, peccatorem; continuò & æquus, & prudens, & innocens erit. *Lactantius de Falſ. Sap. lib.* 3. *Cap.* 26.

ceitful world, is far above what human wiſdom can pretend to; but to make a lewd and a profligate wretch, become eminent and remarkable for piety and virtue, muſt needs draw after it, not only the admiration of men, but alſo the vexation of Hell; and make the Devil rage, as diſappointed of the prey he thought himſelf ſure of: but above all, muſt produce *joy in Heaven*, amongſt Myriads of Saints and Angels, and Spirits of juſt men made perfect.

Motives *to* practice.

All that now remains, is to apply this to our ſelves: For, a man may, by the grace of God, break through difficulties which ſeem inſuperable. A ſtrong reſolution accompany'd with the aſſiſtance of the Almighty, is of ſuch an incredible force, that it has been effectual to reclaim the greateſt of ſinners. Not only St. *Paul*, but *Manaſſes*, *Mary Magdalen*, *the penitent Thief*, and many others, have been by a very extraordinary and over-powering degree of God's grace, almoſt perfectly reclaim'd from their ſins at once, and all on a ſudden *tranſlated out of the kingdom of Darkneſs, into the kingdom of his dear-eſt Son*. And thus it was with many of the firſt converts to Chriſtianity; as their prejudices againſt the chriſtian Religion were ſtrong and violent, ſo the holy Spirit of God was pleas'd to work mightily in them that believed. And ſhall we then ſtand it out with God, when ſuch great leaders have given up the cauſe, and have ſurrender'd and yielded up themſelves willing captives to the grace of God? No certainly! The boundleſs goodneſs and compaſſion of our heavenly Father, muſt needs kindle ſome ſparks of hope, even in the moſt deſponding mind. His wonderful patience and condeſcenſion, in the midſt of our manifold provocations, is a clear demonſtration, that he wou'd have all men come

come to repentance; and if we do repent, we are assur'd by his promise that we shall be forgiven. Let us then call in the auxiliaries of divine grace, and earnestly resolve upon a better course, in this, or the like manner. "This *head* of mine, which was wont to be employ'd in the contrivances of the world, or in catering for my lusts, shall now be exercised in studying how I may do most honour to my Maker. This *wit* which was wont to go out in froth, or in scoffing at all that was serious, shall now make apologies for what before it blasphem'd. This *tongue*, that was used to cursing and swearing, shall now be employ'd in singing anthems of praise to my great Creator. My *hands* shall now dispense as liberally to charitable purposes, as they have sordidly rak'd together before. I will be as exemplary for sobriety and chastity, as ever I was notorious for excesses: And wherever I have wrong'd any body in my dealings, I will now spare from my self to make them a recompence. In short, by the grace of God, from this very moment, I stedfastly resolve that neither pleasure shall tempt me, nor profit allure me, nor ambition corrupt me, nor example sway me, to do any thing which I know to be evil: And on the other side, there shall neither difficulty discourage me, nor tediousness of the course weary me, in the race of virtue and holiness. *So help me, O my God!*" Methinks, such a resolution as this, must needs prove effectual and victorious, and furnish us with sufficient weapons to assoil the most formidable temptations. Let us then no longer delay, but instantly implore the divine aid to prosper and succeed our endeavours. Let us experience whether victory over our

Resolution.

Conclusion.

our Paſſions, be not as noble as the gratification of them; and whether intellectual joys, be not as raviſhing and attractive, as ſenſual allurements; and a regular converſation, as eaſy and agreeable, as that of the lawleſs and licentious. I am very well aſſur'd, that if we conſider the matter throughly, and have but patience to reaſon out the caſe with our ſelves, and to bring our thoughts and deliberations to ſome iſſue, the concluſion muſt naturally be departing from evil, and running the ways of God's commandments with exquiſite pleaſure and delight.

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty God! creator and governor of all things both in Heaven and Earth, who deſireſt not the death of a ſinner, but had rather he ſhould turn from his wickedneſs and live: In much mercy look down upon me, and* convert *me from the innumerable errors and miſcarriages of my life. I acknowledge, O my God! with ſhame and ſorrow, that I am altogether unworthy of the leaſt of thy mercies, and that reproach and ſhame are juſtly my due; but at the ſame time, the conſideration of thy mercy and loving-kindneſs, even to the worſt of ſinners, raiſes my drooping Spirits, and gives new life to my hopes. Thou, my God, haſt made all things by thy power, and art wonderful in all thy doings; yet art thou ſuperlatively wonderful, and exceeding glorious in thy works of pity and love. Oh! let this thy amazing goodneſs lead me to repentance, and grant that the miraculous* Converſion *of thy ſervant St.* Paul, *may have ſuch a prevailing influence upon me, that I may henceforth follow after all manner of virtue, and utterly abandon and deteſt all ſort of vice. Let me*

lay

lay ſeriouſly to heart thy wonderful compaſſion, in not cutting him off in the midſt of his ſins: Let me admire that grace whereby thou didſt make him a veſſel prepar'd unto glory: *Let me adore that incomprehenſible love, whereby thou didſt enable him to publiſh the Goſpel, to the unſpeakable advantage of the whole world. And, as no hour, no minute paſſes by, without ſome ſtupendious inſtance of thy bounty; ſo let no moment of my life paſs without a grateful and thankful remembrance of ſo kind a benefactor; without ſuch zealous and conſtant love of ſo good a God, as my frail nature and narrow ſoul can extend to. Open my eyes, O Lord, to* behold the wondrous things in thy Law. *Convince me powerfully that religion and virtue is true gain, and that in* keeping thy commandments there is great reward: *That ſo, by theſe qualifications, I may become a fit object of the divine favour, and at laſt be received with the joy and triumph of Angels, and all the celeſtial Hoſt, into thoſe glorious manſions, whither* Chriſt Jeſus, *the author of eternal ſalvation, is gone before: To whom with thee, and the holy Spirit, be glory and adoration, world without end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O God! who through the preaching of the bleſſed Apoſtle St. *Paul*, haſt caus'd the light of the Goſpel to ſhine throughout the World: Grant, I beſeech thee, that I having his wonderful *Converſion* in remembrance, may ſhew forth my thankfulneſs to thee for the ſame, by following the holy doctrine which he taught, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm 9, 10, 11.
Evening. 12, 13, 14.

THE PURIFICATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. Wiſd. 9. 2. Mark 2.
Evening. 1. Leſſ. Wiſd. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 14.

THE bleſſed Virgin and *Joſeph*, having been punctual in obſerving the law of Circumciſion, were no leſs exact in the performance of two other commandments of the law: One of which oblig'd every mother, after her delivery, to touch no manner of thing that was holy for a certain time, nor to enter into the Temple, for forty days after the birth of a ſon, and fourſcore after the birth of a daughter, and, after that term, to go thither to be *purify'd*; for which purpoſe, ſhe was oblig'd (if ſhe was able) to offer a Lamb for a burnt-offering, or elſe, a pair of *Pigeons*, or *Turtle Doves*, which being offer'd by the prieſt, ſhe was clean. The other commandment enjoin'd all perſons to bring their firſt-born males, both of man and beaſt, to be preſented to God at the Temple; the latter to be ſacrific'd, and the former to be redeem'd for five ſhekels, or about ten ſhillings; and this was in commemoration of God's ſlaying all the firſt-born of the *Egyptians*, and delivering the *Iſraelites*.

The holy Virgin's Purification.

In obedience to theſe two laws, at the expiration of forty days, the holy Virgin with *Joſeph* went up to *Jeruſalem*, to offer the ſacrifice preſcrib'd by the law for her *Purification*; and according to her indigent condition, ſhe offer'd *two young Pigeons*. At the ſame time, they carry'd the holy *Jeſus* along with them, to preſent him

him to the Lord, and they deliver'd him into the hands of the prieſt, and redeem'd him, according to the law. *Our* Saviour's Preſentation *in the* Temple.

But, as every circumſtance of our Saviour's birth, was attended with ſomething miraculous and extraordinary, ſo at the ſame inſtant, while they were in the Temple, came in a very pious perſon named *Simeon*; a man eminent for his exact juſtice, fervent devotion, lively faith, and extraordinary inſpiration, as the holy text aſſures us: He long'd earneſtly for the coming of the *Meſſias*, and God Almighty had aſſur'd him by revelations that he ſhould not deſcend to the grave, before he had ſeen the Redeemer of the World. So when the devout old man, by the illumination of the Spirit, ſaw the divine Child, he was raviſh'd and tranſported with joy, and taking him in his arms, he fell a ſinging his *Nunc Dimittis*, or Swan-like Anthem, wiſhing to cloſe his eyes with that bleſſed object, ſaying: *Lord! now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word. For mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation. Which thou haſt prepar'd before the face of all people: A light to lighten the* Gentiles, *and the glory of thy people* Iſrael. *His* Reception *by* Simeon.

About the ſame time alſo came in a holy widow, the daughter of *Phanuel*, of the tribe of *Aſer*, nam'd *Anna*; a perſon of about fourſcore years of age, and a very ſtrict obſerver of the Temple-miniſtrations. She likewiſe, by a prophetick Spirit, return'd her moſt unfeigned thanks and praiſe for this ineſtimable mercy, witneſſing *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, and declaring the ſame to all thoſe in *Jeruſalem* that were in expectation of his coming. Thus ended the *Purification* of the bleſſed Virgin, and the preſentation of the holy *Jeſus* in the Temple; after which, *Joſeph* and *Mary*, together with *And by* Anna.

the bleſſed *Jeſus*, return'd into *Galilee*, to their own City *Nazareth*, with great joy and ſatiſfaction.

Candlemas, *why ſo call'd.*

This day is commonly call'd *Candlemas*, from the *Saxon Candlemæſſe*, the Maſs or Feaſt of Candles; for before Maſs is ſaid on this day, the *Romiſh* Church bleſſeth, or ſetteth apart her Candles for ſacred uſe, which ſerve in the Church all the enſuing year. The *Romaniſts* go in proceſſion with hallow'd Candles on this day, in commemoration of the divine light, wherewith our Saviour illuminated the univerſal Church, at his preſentation, when the good old *Simeon* ſtyl'd him *a light to lighten the* Gentiles, and the *glory of his people* Iſrael. 'Tis ſtyl'd alſo the *Purification*, and kept in memory, both of the preſentation of our bleſſed Lord in the Temple, and the Purification of the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*.

For the Epiſtle. Mal. 3. *from* ℣. 1. *to* ℣. 6.

MEDITATIONS FOR The PURIFICATION.

Goſpel. Luke 2. *from* ℣. 22. *to* ℣. 41.

ALTHO' the bleſſed Virgin-mother of our Lord might have pleaded juſt exemption from the ceremony of *Purification*, becauſe ſhe neither ſinn'd in the conception, nor was impure in the production; yet ſhe legally diſcharg'd herſelf in the publick opinion and common eſtimation, and diſtinguiſh'd herſelf by a moſt exact obedience, and exemplary humility. Her obedience had all the ingredients that might commend it to our imitation; for conſider but the dignity of the perſon that obey'd, ſhe was no

no leſs than the mother of the only-begotten Son of God; ſhe was choſen to be an inſtrument of an univerſal bleſſing, which all former ages had deſir'd, and all future times ſhould rejoice in; and both would proclaim her happy above all women, who ſhould be the inſtrument of this mercy. She miraculouſly conceiv'd by the power and operation of the Holy Spirit, and conſequently the fruit of her womb had an unqueſtionable ſanctity. Notwithſtanding, when the days of her *Purification*, according to the law of *Moſes*, were accompliſh'd, ſhe repair'd to *Jeruſalem*, to ſolemnize thoſe rites and ceremonies that were requir'd of the reſt of her Sex: She was reſolv'd to be very ſtrict and punctual in the performance of her duty, *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.* Which conſideration cannot but excite us to a moſt chearful obedience, which adds an excellency and luſtre to all our actions. This marvellous pattern muſt likewiſe beget in us humble and mean thoughts of our ſelves; to think no office below us, when we conſider the condeſcenſion of one ſo infinitely our ſuperior. The bleſſed Virgin receiv'd an honour which the greateſt Queens would have purchas'd with the quitting of their diadems; but at the ſame time, ſhe deſir'd no higher an appellation, than the *hand-maid of the Lord:* She valued herſelf upon nothing ſo much as upon being the ſervant of the bleſſed *Jeſus:* And her humility drew the eye of God to regard her, as he will the meaneſt of us, if our obedience equals hers; and eſpecially, if our minds be as humble in our ſeveral ſtations as her's was.

The Purification *of the* bleſſed Virgin *teacheth us,* Obedience, *And* Humility.

The holy Virgin, having receiv'd ſuch ſtupendious favours from the hand of the Almighty, knew very well to whoſe glory and honour

they ought to redound; and therefore returns the holy *Jeſus* in a preſent to God again; for ſhe had nothing ſo precious and ineſtimable as himſelf to make oblation of. This is an excellent pattern for all parents, whereby they may prevent the Devil, by giving God and goodneſs an early poſſeſſion of their children, and by inſtilling good principles into their hearts betimes. Poſſeſſion is a great point; and it is of mighty conſequence to have nature planted with good ſeeds, before vicious inclinations ſpring up, and grow into ſtrength and habit. Cuſtom (ſays *Pliny*) is *efficaciſſimus omnium rerum magiſter, the moſt powerful and effectual maſter in every kind:* It bears a great ſway in all human actions, but eſpecially in thoſe that are virtuous. To be early engag'd in a religious cauſe, is an unſpeakable advantage; and therefore, all parents ſhould be diligently careful, that their children conſecrate the beginning of their days and the flower of their youth to the ſervice of their creator. This gives the World the beſt ſecurity that Religion will be propagated to poſterity, and that the generations to come ſhall know God, and the *children that are to be born ſhall fear the Lord.*

The preſentation of Jeſus.

An excellent example for Parents.

At the preſentation of *Jeſus*, two very holy perſons, *Simeon* and *Anna*, came into the Temple, by revelation and direction of the Spirit; and when they ſaw that illuſtrious perſon, whom their ſoul long'd for, they rejoic'd exceedingly. But old *Simeon*, being in an extaſy, takes the divine Child into his arms, and deſires to *depart*, being content to reſign his ſoul, ſince God had fulfill'd his promiſe and revelation made to him by the *Holy Ghoſt*. For (in the language of an excellent writer) as a man who hath ſtar'd too freely upon the face and beauties of the Sun, is blind

The admirable piety of Simeon *conſider'd.*

blind and dark to objects of a leſs ſplendor, and is forc'd to ſhut his eyes, that he may, thro' the degrees of darkneſs, perceive the inferior beauties of more proportion'd objects: So was old *Simeon*, his eyes were ſo fill'd with the glory of this revelation, that he was willing to cloſe them in his laſt night, that he might be brought into the communications of eternity; for he could never more find comfort in any other object this world could miniſter. "I "have ſeen the Prince of peace (ſays he) *Mine* "*eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation*, and they deſire to "ſee no more: Into thy hands (bleſſed *Jeſus*) "whom I hold in mine, I commend my fainting Spirits; embrace my ſoul in the arms of "thy mercy, as I embrace thy bleſſed body "with theſe arms of fleſh." After he had ſeen the Saviour of mankind, he humbly craves his diſmiſſion: His holy ſoul that came from God, can find no reſt on the waters of this world, and therefore, deſires to return with an Olive-branch of peace to its dear Lord, where it was ſure of reſt and joy among its beſt friends. He now deſires leave to *depart* from the fleſh, which he had long eſteem'd his priſon, wherein he was confin'd by his infirmities, and ſhut up from beholding the glories of God, which he now longs to ſee more than ever, by this laſt experience of his truth and mercy; and, knowing that death would ſet him free, his deſires and joy begin to ſwell too big to be confined in the walls of fleſh, and now he is even ſtreightned till he be let looſe into the regions of glory, to praiſe him face to face. O let this wonderful example, from this very inſtant, have a ſacred influence upon us; let us from henceforth look on this our Redeemer ſo ſtedfaſtly with the eyes of faith, and embrace him

And illuſtrated.

Concluſion.

ſo lovingly in our hearts, that it may appear he is dearer to us than our very lives. Let us love him ſo entirely, that nothing may ſatisfy us without him; and truſt ſo fully in his merits and mercies, that we may live chearfully, and die peaceably.

The PRAYER.

O *Eternal God! who vouchſafeſt me this day to commemorate the bleſſed Virgin's preſenting herſelf in the temple to be* purify'd, *and her Son to be redeem'd, according to the law: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that I may diligently follow this great exemplar of obedience and humility; that I may make oblation of my ſelf to thee in thy holy Temple, and frequently worſhip thee in the* beauty of holineſs. *O do thou beget in me an univerſal regard to my duty; that I may be defective in no part of it. Give me piety towards thee my God; temperance and chaſtity in regard of my ſelf; charity towards the poor; truth and juſtice, good-will and kindneſs towards all the world; that coming with theſe accompliſhments to the throne of grace, I may receive the reward of good old* Simeon, *not only in the expectation, but in the fruition of the ever-bleſſed* Jeſus. *I cannot now behold my Saviour with my bodily eyes, but I have had* his ſalvation *clearly manifeſted in his holy word. Lord, grant me thy holy Spirit, that I may behold my Redeemer with the ſame faith, and embrace him with the ſame affections as good old* Simeon *did; and then I ſhall chearfully join in a* Nunc Dimittis, *and being daily ready to die, ſhall ever be fit to live, and thy will ſhall be done in life or death. Grant this, O merciful Father! for thy dear Son* Jeſus Chriſt's *ſake, to whom with*

with thee, and the Holy Spirit, be all glory, and dominion, and praiſe, for ever and ever. Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty and ever-living God, I humbly beſeech thy Majeſty, that as thy only-begotten Son was this day preſented in the Temple, in ſubſtance of my fleſh; ſo I may be preſented unto thee, with a pure and clean heart, by the ſame thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt* my *Lord. Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm. 116, 117, 118. *Evening.* 119. *Par.*

St. Matthias's-Day.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. *Wiſd.* 19. 2. *Luke* 7. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. *Eccleſ.* 1. 2. *Epheſ.* 1.

St. Matthias *one of the ſeventy.*

THE ſacred ſtory gives us no particular account either of the parentage or birth-place of this Apoſtle: It is certain, he was one of our *Lord's* Diſciples, who had attended on him in the time of his publick miniſtry, and after his death was elected into the Apoſtleſhip upon this occaſion:

Judas *betrayed his* Maſter.

Judas Iſcariot, one of the twelve Apoſtles, having, by his inſatiable avarice betray'd his innocent Lord into the hands of his mortal enemies the *Jews*, and for no greater a reward than thirty pieces of Silver; he was immediately ſeiz'd with intolerable horror and remorſe of conſcience, for the unparallel'd impiety and cruelty of the fact; and being thus expos'd to the ſevere reſentments of a ſelf-tormenting mind, he threw back the wages of iniquity into open court, and

His violent death.

went, and hanged himſelf; and the judgment was made more notorious and eminent, by an unuſual accident, for he ſo ſwell'd, that he burſt, and his bowels guſh'd out. By this means, there was a vacancy made in the college of Apoſtles, which made them very deſirous to fill up their number with a fit and proper perſon. To which purpoſe *Peter* (immediately after the aſcenſion of our bleſſed *Lord*) in a full aſſembly of the Chriſtians at *Jeruſalem*, propounded the matter to them, and deſir'd their aſſiſtance and judgment, in making election of a perſon qualified for ſo high

high and great an office. The concurring vote of the whole congregation appointed two, *Joſeph* call'd *Barſabas*, (who was ſir-named *Juſtus*,) and *Matthias*; both duly qualified for the Apoſtleſhip, as being conſtant companions and Diſciples of the Holy *Jeſus*, and conſequently capable of bearing witneſs of his life, death, and reſurrection: But which of theſe two to prefer, they were not very well agreed. Wherefore, they reſolv'd to decide the matter by caſting lots, (an uſual way of determining ambiguous matters in things ſacred) and that the buſineſs might proceed with the greater regularity and ſucceſs, they firſt ſolemnly made their addreſs to Heaven, that the omniſcient Being who govern'd the world, and perfectly underſtood the tempers and diſpoſitions of men, would immediately guide and direct the choice, and ſhew which of theſe two, he would appoint to take that part of the Apoſtolick charge, from which *Judas* was ſo lately fallen. Having thus done, they *gave forth their lots, and the lot fell upon* Matthias, *and he was numbred with the eleven Apoſtles.*

The election of a new Apoſtle.

The lot fell upon Matthias.

St. *Matthias* being thus made one of the twelve, he remain'd at *Jeruſalem* till the great Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, and afterwards betook himſelf to his charge and province. The firſt fruits of his miniſtry he ſpent in *Judæa*, where having had great ſucceſs, he betook himſelf to other provinces. He is by the *Greeks* reported to have travelled eaſt-ward; *Nicephorus* ſaith, into higher *Æthiopia*; and *Sophronius*, into lower *Æthiopia*; but with more probability, *Cappadocia* was the place where he fix'd his principal reſidence, having been at the confluence of the river *Apſarus*, near the haven *Hyſſus*. In his travels, he met with manifold troubles and difficulties; and at laſt, (as ſome affirm) *Ananus* the high prieſt

The places *where he* preach'd.

prieſt apprehended him in *Galilee*, and had him brought before him; and making a long ſpeech to him, after he found him, contrary to his exhortation, aſſerting *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* to be the true *Meſſiah*, he condemn'd him to be ſton'd, and the ſentence was immediately executed: But of this, or of any other account of St. *Matthias*'s death, we have but ſlender authorities. The *Greeks* celebrate his Feaſt on the 9th of *Auguſt*, and the *Latins* on the 24*th* of *February*.

His martyrdom.

For the *Epiſtle*. Act. 1. *from* ℣ 15. *to the end.*

MEDITATIONS FOR St. MATTHIAS's DAY.

Goſpel. Mat. 11. *from* ℣ 25, *to the end.*

IN the whole hiſtory of the life of our bleſſed Saviour, we have no intimation that *Judas Iſcariot* had any malice againſt the Perſon of his Lord and Maſter; for the holy *Jeſus* had been infinitely kind to him, made him an Apoſtle, and took him to be one of his peculiar domeſticks and attendants. But, at the ſame time, he was a Man acted by ſordid and mean deſigns, one that had proſtituted Religion, and the honour of his ſtation, to covetouſneſs and ſiniſter arts. The love of money had ſo entirely ingroſs'd his thoughts, that his conduct was wholly govern'd by ſordid intereſt. This covetous temper puſh'd him forwards to commit ſuch a prodigious inſtance of impiety, as all ages of the world could never parallel; even to the betraying his innocent *Lord* into the hands of his moſt malicious adverſaries. Thus we ſee that covetouſneſs is (as the Apoſtle ſays) *The root of all evil*: It being an unmerciful principle, which, like death, will pity or ſpare none; and

Covetouſneſs *the root of all evil.*

and which will put men upon the baſeſt and moſt unwarrantable means to ſatisfy its inſatiable luſt. Accordingly, *Judas* thought the price of a ſlave (*Exod.* xxi. 32.) a ſum not much above three pounds, a ſufficient price for betraying the Son of God, into the hands of thoſe who unqueſtionably would treat him with all the circumſtances of ſcorn and cruelty.

But there's an active principle in man's breaſt, that ſeldom ſuffers daring ſinners to paſs undiſturbed to their graves; for it was but at midnight that *Judas* receiv'd his money, and betimes in the morning he repented his bargain: He was awaken'd with the horror of his fact, and not being able to bear up under the furious remorſe of his own mind, he immediately went and hanged himſelf. A vicious man is certainly a very ſhocking ſight, and to none more ſo than to himſelf; the odiouſneſs of ſin, and the evident danger of eternal ruin, continually hanging over him, makes his life inconceivably miſerable. Here the foundation of Hell is laid, in the evil diſpoſitions of a man's own mind, which are naturally ſelf-tormenting: and till this be cured, it is as impoſſible for him to be happy, as for a limb that is out of joint to be at eaſe; becauſe the man's ſpirits are excentrical and out of order, and till they be ſet right, and reſtor'd to their proper and natural ſtate, the man will be perpetually unquiet, and can have no reſt and peace within himſelf. *The wicked* (ſaith the prophet) *is like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt: There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked.* No peace with God or his own mind; for he finds a ſting and ſecret remorſe for his vicious acts, and impious machinations. The experience of all ſorts of people, do unanimouſly agree, that the remorſe of conſcience can never be totally extinguiſhed: For let

The terrors of a guilty conſcience.

let the moſt fearleſs ſinner upon earth ſpeak out and tell us, whether he can command down the clamours and revilings of a guilty conſcience, and impoſe ſilence upon that importunate reprover. He may perhaps, for a while, put on an air of ſelf-ſufficiency and triumph; but can he look his conſcience out of countenance? He may diſſemble a little forc'd jollity, when he is in company, and the cups go quickly round; but at the ſame time, no perſon, beſides his own wretched miſerable ſelf, knows of thoſe ſecret bitter infuſions, which that terrible thing, call'd conſcience, mingles with all his draughts. Paradiſe, with all its pleaſures, could not ſecure *Adam*, after he had ſinned, from this officious remembrancer: Neither could the *thirty pieces of Silver* bribe the conſcience of the traytor *Judas*. When he took a full view of his guilt in its native ſhape, what confuſion of thoughts, what a combat of paſſions was he in? How did ſhame, ſorrow, revenge, deſpair, thoſe ſecret executioners, torment his ſpirits? Deſpair doth almoſt naturally ſpring from an evil conſcience; and when men are throughly awaken'd to a ſenſe of ſin, and of the infinite evil of it, as they cannot eaſily forgive themſelves, ſo they can hardly believe there is goodneſs enough any where to forgive them.

What we may learn from the obſervation of this Feſtival.

Thus we may learn from the obſervation of this Feſtival theſe things, firſt to beware of covetouſneſs, which is a great and enormous vice, and which tends to the deſtruction both of ſoul and body. Secondly, to reverence our conſciences, becauſe as there is no ſuch comfort on this ſide the grave, as a faithful witneſs in our breaſts of our own innocency and integrity; ſo on the other hand, there is nothing can create ſo much trouble and diſquiet to us. The laſt particular

to

to be taken notice of, is the making our application to God Almighty in all emergent occaſions and neceſſities. The Apoſtles before they would admit either *Barſabas* or St. *Matthias* into the Apoſtleſhip, made their addreſſes to Heaven for direction: They prayed that the Lord, who knew the hearts of all Men, would be pleaſed to ſhew which of thoſe two perſons he knew beſt qualified for ſo ſacred a function. There is not the leaſt thing that falls within the cognizance of man, but is directed by the immutable counſel of God. Things are not left to an *Æquilibrium*, to hover under an indifference, whether they ſhall or ſhall not come to paſs; but the whole train of events is laid before-hand, and all proceed by the rule of an antecedent direction. *The lot is caſt into the lap, but the whole diſpoſing of it is of the Lord:* (Prov. xvi. 33.) He knows which way the lot or the dye ſhall fall, as perfectly as if they were already caſt. Since therefore, God is the only object of our truſt and confidence, to him alone we ought to addreſs all our prayers and ſupplications, for mercy and grace to help in the time of need. We ought totally to rely upon him; and in all caſualties to promiſe our ſelves the beſt events from his providence, to whom nothing is caſual: Who conſtantly wills the trueſt happineſs to thoſe that truſt him, and works all things according to the counſel of that bleſſed will.

God, *the ſole diſpoſer of all* events.

Upon all which conſiderations, let us from henceforth entirely rely upon the unerring providence of the Almighty, which will certainly miniſter to us all the true cauſes of peace and tranquillity of mind. Let us live in a ſtrict conformity to the dictates of a well-informed judgment, and let neither covetouſneſs nor ambition, or any temptation whatſoever, prevail upon us to act

Concluſion.

act counter to its ſenſe and perſuaſion. Let us beware of the fatal apoſtacy of *Judas*, and not by fraud and deceit re-betray our bleſſed Lord and Maſter. In a word, let us be continually vigilant, and always upon our guard, and in a conſtant readineſs and preparation for the hour of death: And by theſe means we ſhall acquire far more peace, more joy, and ſatisfaction, than all the vain allurements of this world can afford us. For, (as the Prophet aſſures us) *The fruit of righteouſneſs is peace, and the effect of righteouſneſs is quietneſs and aſſurance for ever.*

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty and ever-living God! by whoſe ſpecial grace, the bleſſed* Matthias *was choſen to ſupply the room of the traytor* Judas, *and compleat the number of the Apoſtles: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that my devout celebration of his memory, may raiſe in me a great ambition to imitate his virtues, and that thereby, I may follow him in his happy paſſage to everlaſting glory. O ſecure me from the wages of ſin, and let thy name have the glory of an inexpreſſible bounty and pity. Grant me, O Lord, thy grace, that neither covetouſneſs nor ambition, treachery, nor ingratitude to thee my God, may rob me of the triumphs and applauſes of a good conſcience: And to the end that virtue may be exalted, and vice abaſed, fill up the number of thy perſecuted Apoſtles with men of excellent Spirits, of eminent courage and perſeverance, and ſupply the places of all apoſtatizing Diſciples, with perſons of fidelity, and confirmed goodneſs: That by this means thou mayſt accompliſh the happy number of thine elect, through the merits, and for the ſake, of my Saviour and Redeemer; to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, be*

be all honour and glory, adoration and thankſgiving, aſcrib'd by me, and all the world, now and ever. Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who in the place of the traytor *Judas*, didſt chuſe thy faithful Servant *Matthias*, to be of the number of the twelve Apoſtles: Grant, that thy Church, being alway preſerved from falſe Apoſtles, may be ordered and guided by faithful and true paſtors, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

T The

Morning Pſalm 119. *par.*

Evening. 119. *par.*

The ANNUNCIATION Of the Bleſſed VIRGIN.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Eccl. 3, 2. Joh. 12.

Evening, 1 Leſſ. Eccl. 3. 2 Tim. 3.

THE predictions of the Prophets being about to be accompliſh'd, and the fulneſs of time come in which God had appointed to ſhew forth his Mercy and give a Saviour to the world: In the days of *Herod* the King, the Angel *Gabriel* was ſent from God, unto a City of *Galilee*, call'd *Nazareth*, to an holy Virgin, nam'd *Mary*; a perſon of low condition, eſpouſed to *Joſeph*, and of the ſame family of *David*, but of no higher profeſſion than a carpenter. At the Angel's approach to this pious maid, he immediately congratulated her, with her being *highly in favour with the Almighty, and being bleſſed above the reſt of her ſex*: Which ſurprizing words, and unuſual ſight, rais'd a ſtrange commotion in her breaſt, and no leſs admiration at ſuch an uncommon ſalutation. For, (as a learned prelate obſerves) if the Angel appeared in the ſhape of a man, it was an unuſual arreſt to the bleſſed Virgin, who was accuſtomed to retirements and ſolitarineſs, and had not known an inſtance of admitting a comely perſon to her cloſet and privacies: But, if the heavenly meſſenger did retain a diviner form, more ſymbolical to angelical nature, and more proportionable to his glorious meſſage; altho' her daily Employment was a converſation with Angels, who in the daily miniſtring to the Saints, did *behold her chaſt converſation, coupled with*

An Angel *appears to the bleſſed* Virgin.

His Addreſs.

St. Luke Chap. I.

The Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin.

St. Luke 1. Verse 28.

And the Angel came in unto her, and said Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord *is with thee, blessed art thou &c.*


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with fear; yet they uſed no affrighting glories in the offices of their daily attendances, but were ſeen only by ſpiritual diſcernings. However, ſo it happen'd, that her modeſty rais'd in her a great diſturbance at the unuſual appearance of the Angel, that ſhe was very much ſurpriz'd at this kind of ſalutation. But, the Angel (who came with deſigns of honour and comfort to her) not willing that the inequality and glory of the meſſenger, ſhould, like too glorious a light to a weak eye, rather confound the faculty than enlighten the organ, invited her to a more familiar confidence, than poſſibly a tender Virgin could put on, in the preſence of ſuch a beauty and holineſs: So, before her thoughts could find a tongue, the Angel bad her ſuffer no diſturbance in her mind, ſince ſhe was ſo highly eſteem'd by God: For, ſhe ſhould have the happineſs of bearing a Son, call'd by the name of *Jeſus* or a Saviour; who ſhould be the long expected *Meſſiah*, to whom God ſhould give the throne of his father *David*, and his ſovereignty and kingdom ſhould have no period. The bleſſed Virgin not doubting the Angel's veracity, but admiring at the ſtupendious work, modeſtly deſired to know how this could be brought to paſs, ſince ſhe was to continue a Virgin, according to the ancient prophecy? The Angel immediately perceiv'd where the *Philoſophy* of her queſtion did conſiſt, and therefore very readily told her, that this holy Child, which ſhall be called the Son of God, ſhould be conceiv'd by the inviſible operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*: And to demonſtrate to her, that God (to whom nothing was impoſſible) would work this aſtoniſhing miracle in her by his almighty power; he tells her, what had befallen her couſin *Elizabeth*, who, having been barren

She is ſurpriz'd.

He delivers his Meſſage.

An Argument to aſſert the truth of it.

for many years, was ſix months ſince with child. Being fully ſatisfied with this anſwer, the holy Virgin with all modeſty and humility joyfully accepted of the divine bounty, and made an act of entire reſignation, ſaying, *Behold the hand-maid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.* Then the Angel *Gabriel* departed from her, and the power of the *Holy Ghoſt* did deſcend upon her, and wrought this great myſtery in her; for which ſhe had been fitted and diſpos'd a great while before, by the plentiful effuſion of his graces. So ſhe conceiv'd in her womb the ſecond Perſon in the ever-bleſſed *Trinity*, who was the immaculate Lamb of God, the Saviour of the World.

Jeſus *conceiv'd by the power of the* Holy Ghoſt.

For the Epiſtle. Iſa. 7. *from* v. 10. *to* v. 16.

MEDITATIONS For the ANNUNCIATION.

Goſpel. Luke 1. *from* v. 26. *to* v. 39.

THE ſupernatural conception of the holy and eternal *Jeſus*, in the womb of the bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, is a truth ſo ſtupendious and incomprehenſible, that it tranſcends our thoughts to conceive how it ſhould come to paſs. That the Word ſhould be made fleſh, and God ſhould take a body; that eternity ſhould have a beginning, and infiniteneſs be contain'd within the compaſs of a ſpan; that the divine Nature and the humanity ſhould be ſo wonderfully united; this is the *wiſdom of God in a myſtery*, and conſequently, too high for our ſpeculations, and too great for our deſcriptions. That the Creator and the creature ſhould be thus miraculouſly allied is one of the great *Arcana* of Heaven, and a work abundantly declaratory of omnipotence.

Incarnation *of our* Saviour *moſt ſtupendious* Myſtery.

The

The Apoſtle mentions it with an attribute of excellency, (1 *Tim.* iii. 16.) *Without controverſy, great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſt in the fleſh.* A Myſtery too deep for the apprehenſion of Angels to underſtand; yet, it was not too great a miracle, for *Jeſus* to accompliſh for our ſalvation. And therefore we ought, with all the powers and faculties of our ſouls, joyfully to admire and adore this great and glorious diſpenſation.

But, to the end that we may not entertain any erroneous opinions, concerning the great myſtery of the incarnation of our bleſſed Saviour; it will be neceſſary to conſider the three following particulars. Firſt, who it was that was conceived and born: Secondly, by whoſe energy or operation he was conceived: And, Thirdly, who the perſon was that did conceive and bear him. Firſt then, he who was conceived and born; was the ſecond Perſon in the glorious *Trinity*, the ever-bleſſed and eternal Son of God. He which took upon him the nature of man was not the Father, (as the *Patripaſſians* would have it) nor the *Holy Ghoſt*, but the only begotten Son. For altho' the humane nature was conjoined with the Divinity, which is the nature common to the Father, Son, and *Holy Ghoſt*; yet was that union made only in the Perſon of the Son, who was conceived and born, and ſo made really and truly Man, of the ſame humane nature which is in all other men, who by the ordinary way of generation are conceived and born. Accordingly, the Scripture uſeth all thoſe expreſſions or appellations which are proper to ſignify a real man; calling him, the *Seed of the Woman*; the *Seed of* Abraham; the *Seed of* David *according to the fleſh*; the Son of Man; and the Man *Chriſt Jeſus*. But beſides this, he performed

The only begotten Son of God.

Became incarnate.

ſuch actions as are natural and proper to men. He continued a great while in the world, and ſubmitted to all thoſe things which are accounted moſt grievous and calamitous to humane nature; and at laſt ſuffer'd, and dy'd, and was laid in the grave, like other men; all which are a plain demonſtration that he a real Man and had a real and ſubſtantial body. This body was alſo enliven'd with a humane ſoul, endued with underſtanding, capable of learning and improvement: For, thus 'tis ſaid, (*Luke* ii. 52.) that *Jeſus encreaſed in wiſdom and ſtature*; one in reſpect of his ſoul, the other of his body. So that (in oppoſition to the impiety of *Arius*, and the bold aſſertions of *Apollinarius*) he who was *perfect God, was alſo perfect Man, of a reaſonable ſoul, and human fleſh ſubſiſting.*

Now in this ineffable union of two ſo different natures, we muſt not conceive as if the divine nature of *Chriſt* was tranſubſtantiated into the humane nature, (as *Cerinthus* taught;) or as if the humane nature was converted or chang'd into the divine, (as *Valentinus* ridiculouſly aſſerted:) For the immaterial indiviſible, and immortal Deity is immutable; and as it can't be chang'd into any thing, ſo nothing can be changed into it. Therefore, we muſt conceive by our Saviour's aſſuming our nature, his being united to humane nature as the ſoul is vitally united to the body; without either being chang'd into it, or confounded with it, or ſwallow'd up by it, as the *Eutychian Hereticks* imagin'd. For, as the ſoul and body united make one Perſon, and yet retain their diſtinct natures and properties; ſo may we conceive the divine and humane natures in *Chriſt* to be united into one Perſon. In this admirable union, each of the natures preſerves

The manner thereof.

ſerves its proper form, with all the neceſſary conſequences proceeding from it. The humane nature is join'd to the eternal Word, but not chang'd into its Divinity; 'tis not infinite and impaſſible. The Deity is united to fleſh, but not transformed into its nature; 'tis not finite and paſſible. Tho' there is a diſtinction, yet no ſeparation: There are two natures, but one *Jeſus*. *Tho' he be God and Man, yet he is not two, but one* Chriſt: *One, not by converſion of the Godhead into fleſh, but by taking of the Manhood into God: One altogether, not by confuſion of ſubſtance, but by unity of Perſon: For, as the reaſonable ſoul and fleſh is one Man; ſo God and Man is one* Chriſt. Thus much is agreeable to the ſacred writings, and this is what every Chriſtian ought to believe concerning the incarnation of our bleſſed Redeemer.

Having thus clearly explained this truth, *viz.* that he who was conceived, and aſſumed humane nature, was the only Son of God; I proceed now to obſerve that he was not conceived after the manner of men; not by the common way of humane propagation, but by the ſingular, powerful, inviſible, immediate operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*. Heaven and Earth concurr'd to form that divine Man the King of both, the Earth furniſhing matter, and Heaven the principal of this conception. Accordingly, the Angel told *Mary* (Luke i. 35.) who queſtion'd how ſhe could be a mother not having known a man, *The* Holy Ghoſt *ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee.* Now, though we profeſs to believe that *Chriſt* was conceived by the *Holy Ghoſt*; yet not that the *Holy Ghoſt* did conceive him, which the Virgin only did, by the power and operation of the *Holy Ghoſt*: No more is left to be attribut-

Chriſt *conceived by the* Holy Ghoſt.

ed to the Spirit, than what is neceſſary to cauſe the Virgin to perform the part of a mother. The *Holy Ghoſt* then it was who immediately and miraculouſly enabled the bleſſed Virgin (without the concurrence of any man) to conceive, and that which was conceived in her, was originally and compleatly ſanctified.

Of the Virgin Mary.

The next circumſtance that falls under our conſideration, in reference to the incarnation of our bleſſed Saviour, is the perſon who did conceive and bear him. Now the Evangeliſt relating the *Annunciation*, taketh particular notice that her name was *Mary*; not for any peculiar excellency in the name it ſelf, but only to aſcertain and diſtinguiſh that ſingular perſon, known to be eſpous'd unto *Joſeph*. But the title added to that name, maketh a more conſiderable diſtinction, ſhe being remarkably known by that inſeparable character of her name, *the Virgin*. It was foretold, of ſuch a one the promiſed *Meſſias* was to be born, according to the predictions of the prophets (Jer. xxxi. 23.) *The Lord hath created a new thing on the earth, a Woman ſhall compaſs a Man*; and again moſt emphatically, *Behold a Virgin ſhall conceive and bear a Son*, (Iſa. vii. 14.) And ſuch was *Mary* the Mother of our *Lord*, though eſpous'd unto *Joſeph*, yet *before they came together, ſhe was found with Child of the* Holy Ghoſt, (*Matth.* i. 18.)

A Virgin *always.*

And as ſhe was a Virgin while ſhe was with Child, ſo ſhe was a Virgin even when and after ſhe brought forth: Nay, it would be a degree of profaneneſs and a renouncing antiquity to doubt the perpetual Virginity of the Mother of our *Lord*: For though whatſoever ſhould have followed could be no reproach upon the firſt-fruit of her womb; yet (as a learned man obſerves) the peculiar eminency and unparallell'd privilege

privilege of that *Mother*; the ſpecial honour and reverence due unto that *Son*, and ever paid by her; the ſingular goodneſs and piety of *Joſeph* to whom ſhe was eſpouſed; have perſuaded the Church of God in all ages, to believe that ſhe ſtill continued in the ſame Virginity, and therefore is to be acknowledged the ever *Virgin Mary*, Ἀειπαρθένος being the conſtant language of the ancient Fathers.

Thus much may ſuffice to have been ſpoken, concerning that great myſtery of the *Hypoſtatical* or perſonal union of the divine and human nature, in the Perſon of our bleſſed Saviour: In the explication whereof, it is not ſafe for our ſhallow underſtanding to wade farther than the Scripture goes before us; for fear we go out of our depth, and loſe our ſelves in the profound enquiry into the deep things of God, which he has not thought fit in this preſent ſtate of darkneſs and imperfection to reveal more plainly and fully to us. It ought to be thought ſufficient that the Scripture aſſures us, that Divinity and humanity may co-habit in one ſubſiſtence; that two Natures may concur in the ſame perſon; and Heaven and Earth mingle without confuſion. Theſe things, 'tis true, exceed the natural force of humane reaſon to comprehend them, for the improv'd knowledge of them is to be one principal part of our felicity and bleſſedneſs hereafter. * All thoſe heights and depths, which we now ſtand ſo much amaz'd at, and which ſo confound and baffle the ſubtileſt and moſt piercing apprehenſion, ſhall then be made clear, open, and familiar to us. God ſhall then diſplay the hidden glories of his nature, and withal fortify the eye of the ſoul, ſo that it ſhall be able to hold

We are not to ſearch too far into the myſteries of Religion.

They will be more fully reveal'd in Heaven.

* *Dr.* South's *Chriſtianity myſterious.*

and

and take them in, ſo far as the powers of an human intellect ſhall be capable thereof. We ſhall then ſee the myſteries of the *Trinity*, and of the incarnation of *Chriſt*, and of the reſurrection of the dead, unriddled and made plain to us; all the knots of God's decrees and providence united, and made fit for our underſtanding as well as admiration. We ſhall then be tranſported with a nobler kind of wonder; not the effect of ignorance, but the product of a clearer and more advanced knowledge. When we have laid down this clog of fleſh, we ſhall approach the perfection of Angels, who out-ſhine the reſt of the creation in nothing more, than in a tranſcendent ability of knowing and judging; which is the very glory and crowning excellence of a created nature. We ſhall then ſurmount theſe beggarly rudiments and mean helps of knowledge, which now, by many little ſteps gradually raiſe us to ſome ſhort ſpeculation of the nature of things. Our knowledge ſhall be intuitive and above diſcourſe; not proceeding by a long circuit of antecedents and conſequents, as now in this vale of imperfection it is forced to do; but in a word, it ſhall then fully inform the whole mind, and take in the whole object, by one ſingle and ſubſtantial act.

The influence which the Incarnation *of our* Saviour *ought to have on us.*

And that we may have admittance into this bliſsful place, and not have our portion among hereticks and unbelievers; let us thankfully admire the wonderful and amazing condeſcenſion and love of God to mankind, in ſending his Son into the world for our ſalvation and recovery. For what an everlaſting fountain of the moſt ineſtimable bleſſings and benefits, to us poor ſinners, is the incarnation of the holy *Jeſus?* And what are we, that the higheſt and glorious Majeſty of Heaven, ſhould ſtoop down to the Earth, and

and be contented to be cloathed with miſery and mortality? Was there ever any wonder comparable to this! To behold Divinity thus cloathed in fleſh! The Creator of all things humbled not only to the company, but alſo to the cognation of his creatures: That the everlaſting Son of the Father, ſhould purſue us through all the ſtages of our infelicity, and at laſt be pleas'd both to undergo, and to *overcome the ſharpneſs of death, that he might open the kingdom of heaven to all Believers.* Certainly, the remembrance of this, muſt needs tranſport us with inexpreſſible joy, it muſt put us into an ecſtaſy of love and gratitude to our great Benefactor; and cauſe every faculty of our ſouls to unite into a devout celebration of the divine mercy.

Concluſion.

To conclude: Let us then at all times, (and more eſpecially at this ſeaſon) gratefully acknowledge, and joyfully commemorate this great and amazing goodneſs of God to us; and ſince the bleſſed *Jeſus* hath ſo graciouſly condeſcended to be made in all things like unto us, *Sin only excepted*; let us aſpire to be as like to him as is poſſible, in the exemplary holineſs and virtues of his life. Let us celebrate the incarnation of our bleſſed Saviour, by giving praiſe and *glory to God in the higheſt*, and by all poſſible demonſtrations of charity and *good-will to Men:* And as he was pleaſed to aſſume humanity, ſo let us put on the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, that is, ſincerely embrace and practiſe his religion, and be diligently careful to keep our nature from pollution, ſince the Son of God hath ſanctified it, and united it to the Divinity.

The PRAYER.

O Eternal and Almighty God! who did'ſt ſend thy holy Angel in embaſſy to the bleſſed Virgin Mary, *to execute and declare thy will in the redemption of the world, by the incarnation of the ever-bleſſed* Jeſus. *I magnify and adore thy great and holy name, from the bottom of my heart, and give glory to thee for that wonderful condeſcenſion. All honour and praiſe be to thy Fatherly compaſſion, for ſending thine only begotten Son out of thy boſom, for the ſalvation of me and all the world. Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be that aſtoniſhing and unſpeakable goodneſs, for ſuch noble and exalted inſtances of an endearing love. What ſhall I return unto thee, thou great lover of ſouls, for ſuch ſtupendious demonſtrations of thy concern for me? O help me to underſtand and conſider with reverence; to contemplate, and with all diligence to walk worthy of this* Myſtery of Godlineſs; *this wonderful conjunction of the divine and humane nature in one Perſon. And ſince thou haſt done great and ineffable things for me already, I beſeech thee by thine own inutterable love, and by the many gracious promiſes in* Jeſus Chriſt *to perfect the good work thou haſt begun, that I may live and die according to thy will, and at laſt attain to the reſurrection of the juſt, through the merits and interceſſion of my bleſſed Redeemer, to whom with thee, and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, adoration and praiſe, now, and to all eternity.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

I Beſeech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into my heart, that as I have known the incarnation of thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, by the meſſage of an Angel; ſo by his Croſs and Paſſion, I may be brought unto the glory of his reſurrection, through the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt* our *Lord*. Amen.

St.

Morning. Pſalm 119. *Par.* *Evening.* 119. *Par.*

St. MARK's DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Eccl.* 4. 2 *Acts* 22. *Evening.* *Ecc.* 5. 2. 1 *Joh.* 1.

S. *Mark's* kindred.

ST. *Mark* (though a *Roman* by name) was born of *Jewiſh* Parents, originally deſcended of the tribe of *Levi*, and (according to *Nicephorus*) ſiſter's ſon to *Peter*. That he was one of the ſeventy ſome of the ancients agree; but St. *Peter* ſeems to deny his being one of the ſeventy by calling him *Marcus my Son*, or Convert, (1 *Pet.* v. 13.) And *Grotius* obſerves from *Papias*, that St. *Mark* never ſaw our Lord in the fleſh. However 'tis certain he was St. *Peter*'s conſtant companion and attendant, ſupplying the place of an *Amanuenſis* and interpreter. By St. *Peter* he was ſent into *Ægypt*, to plant the Goſpel in thoſe parts, and reſided chiefly at *Alexandria*, in which City and parts adjacent, he converted great multitudes of both ſexes; ſome ſay not only to the embracing the chriſtian faith, but to the profeſſion of an extraordinary ſtrict and even monaſtick life: and theſe, *Euſebius*, and after him *Epiphanius*, St. *Hierom*, and of latter days *Baronius*, think to be the ſame with thoſe θεραπεῦται, or ſect of people, living about the *Maræotick* lake in *Ægypt*, whom *Philo Judæus* deſcribes at large, as a ſect of Men, wholly devoted to a ſtrict, philoſophick, and contemplative courſe of life: But this miſtake is rejected and confuted by Dr. *Prideaux*. Conn. p. 2. b. 5.

His planting Chriſtianity in Alexandria.

And the parts of Libya.

From *Alexandria* he went weſtward, paſſing through the countries of *Marmorica*, *Pentapolis*, and

and other parts of *Libya*, where by his preaching and miracles, he not only made way for the Goſpel, but rooted it in the minds of thoſe people, and confirm'd them in the profeſſion of it. After this, he returned to *Alexandria*, to ſettle that Church, by providing paſtors and governors; and it being about the time of *Eaſter*, when the great ſolemnities of *Serapis* happen'd to be celebrated; the profane *Ægyptians* being excited to a paſſionate vindication of the honour of their Idol, violently broke in upon St. *Mark*, (then engag'd in the ſolemn celebration of divine worſhip) and tying cords to his feet, dragg'd him on the ground, through the ſtreets, into priſon, where his ſoul was by a divine viſion erected and encouraged, under the ruins of his ſhatter'd body. The rage of the people being ſtill unſatisfied, early the next morning they came again, and ſo tore off his fleſh, by dragging him about in the ſame cruel manner, that he expir'd in their hands. Nor did their fury end here, for (according to *Metaphraſtes*) they burnt his dead body, whoſe ſoul had burnt with an ardent zeal for God's glory, and the ſalvation of mankind.

His return to Alexandria.

His Martyrdom.

The Goſpel bearing his name was writ by him at the requeſt of the converts at *Rome*. For (as [a] *Euſebius* tells us) the *Romans* not being ſatisfied with St. *Peter*'s preaching Chriſtianity to them, earneſtly deſired St. *Mark* his companion, that he would give them in writing a ſtanding Monument of that doctrine which St. *Peter* had deliver'd to them by word of mouth; which was the occaſion (ſays my Author) of the writing St. *Mark*'s Goſpel: which thing St. *Pe-*

S. *Mark*'s Goſpel, *when written.*

[a] Euſeb. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 15.

ter

ter underſtanding by a revelation of the Spirit, and being highly pleas'd with their earneſt deſire, he confirm'd it by his own authority, and it was publickly read by his order, in their religious aſſemblies.

In what language. There has been ſome diſpute made in what language St. *Mark*'s Goſpel was written, whether *Greek* or *Latin*. Some believe it was in *Latin*, becauſe (as they alledge) it was written for the uſe of the Inhabitants at *Rome*. Others ſay, that the *Greek* being the modiſh language at that time, 'tis probable, 'twas the tongue there chiefly ſpoken by ſtrangers: And the *Venetians* have an old *Greek* copy, which they confidently affirm to be the original, written by him at *Aquileia*. He begins his Goſpel with the hiſtory of St. *John the Baptiſt*, and ends with our bleſſed *Lord*'s aſcenſion into Heaven, all delivered in a ſuccinct and regular method.

A character of his writings. And although he commonly reduces the ſtory of our Saviour's actions into a narrower compaſs than St. *Matthew*, yet there are ſeveral paſſages which St. *Mark* relates more particularly than he, and wherein he is more comprehenſive and expreſſive.

Epiſtle. Eph. 2. *from* v. 7. *to* v. 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. MARK'S DAY.

Goſpel. John 15. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 12.

AS the chriſtian religion did always conſiſt in an imitation of God, and in reſemblance of thoſe excellencies which ſhine forth in the beſt and moſt perfect Being; ſo it particularly recommends

recommends our doing good to the ſouls of men, as one of the moſt noble and heroical employments in the world. It is a duty in every man's power to perform, how ſtreight and indigent ſoever his fortune and condition be; and the practice of it is the great perfection of our natures, the advancement and enlargement of our ſouls, the chief ornament and beauty of a great mind. It makes us like to the ſupreme Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, in that which is the prime excellency and happineſs and glory of the divine Nature.

Now the bleſſed Evangeliſt St. *Mark*, was very eminent and remarkable for being an univerſal benefactor to the ſouls of men: He preached the Goſpel with abundance of courage and reſolution, and by that means reſcued multitudes of poor ſouls out of the depth of ignorance and error. He brought men to the knowledge of their duty, and excited them to the practice of it: He inſtructed their ignorance, remov'd their prejudices, and rectified their miſtakes by perſuaſion and by reproof; and that he might make laſting proviſions for the promotion of theſe ends, he left behind him his excellent Goſpel, which has been admir'd and entertain'd in all ages of the Church: So that it may be ſaid of him, as it is ſaid of *Abel*, that *being dead he yet ſpeaketh.* And now ſince we have ſuch a valuable treaſure put into our Hands; I may be indulg'd in the digreſſion to conſider the obligation that every Chriſtian is under to ſearch and read the holy Scriptures. *How exerciſed.*

As knowledge in general is neceſſary to Religion, ſo more particularly the knowledge of the holy Scriptures is neceſſary to our everlaſting well-being. For in them we have eternal

The neceſſity of the knowledge of the holy Scriptures.

life propos'd to us, together with all that is neceſſary to be believ'd and practis'd by us, in order to our obtaining it. And this is one article of the faith of the *Church of England*, "That "the holy Scriptures contain all things neceſ- "ſary to ſalvation, ſo that whatſoever is not "read therein, or may be prov'd thence, is not "requir'd of any man that it ſhould be believ'd "as an article of faith, or be thought requiſite "or neceſſary to ſalvation. The ſacred writings therefore are a ſufficient rule both of faith and manners to guide and direct us to eternal happineſs. They are the great and ſtanding revelation of God to mankind; wherein the nature of God, and his will concerning our duty, and the terms and conditions of our eternal happineſs in another world are fully and plainly declared to us. And for the truth of this, we need not depend upon humane authority, for if we conſult thoſe ſacred volumes (which all Chriſtians muſt allow to be the word of God) we ſhall find they give this teſtimony of themſelves, *That they are able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation, thro' faith which is in Jeſus Chriſt*, (2 Tim. iii. 15.) And again, *That all Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſh'd to all good works.* (v. 16, 17.) And to evince this, let us conſider our bleſſed Saviour's ſermon on the Mount, wherein he recommends to us humility, meekneſs and mercy, peaceableneſs and patience, and doing good for evil, which are ſo many beams of God's image, the reflexions of his goodneſs upon intelligent creatures. And that comprehenſive precept of the Apoſtle deſcribes the duties of all Chriſtians: "*Whatſoever things are*

"*true*,

" *true*, (Phil. iv. 8.) Truth (as an ingenious " writer comments upon it) the principal cha- " racter of our profeſſion, is to be expreſs'd in " our words and actions: *Whatſoever things are* " *honeſt*, or venerable, *(i. e.)* anſwer the digni- " ty of our calling, and agree with the gravity " and comelineſs of the chriſtian profeſſion: " *Whatſoever things are pure*, we muſt preſerve " the heart, the hand, the tongue, the eye from " all impurity: *Whatſoever things are lovely, and* " *of good report*, ſome graces are amiable and " attractive in the view of men, as eaſineſs to " pardon, a readineſs to oblige, compaſſion to " the afflicted, liberality to the neceſſitous, " ſweetneſs of converſation without gall and " bitterneſs; theſe are of univerſal Eſteem with " mankind, and ſoften the moſt ſavage tempers: " *If there be any virtue, and if there be any praiſe,* " *think on theſe things.* So that in a word, the ſacred Scriptures contain the *whole duty of man*, in relation both to God, our neighbour or our ſelves; and conſequently are ſufficient to make a man perfect and *throughly furniſhed to every good work.*

Since therefore, the Scriptures are the word of God, from whence can we learn his will, ſo well as from his own mouth? Since they are the great inſtrument of our ſalvation, ſhould not every man be acquainted with that, which alone can perfectly inſtruct him what he muſt believe, and what he muſt do to be ſaved? When God Almighty had ſent this great light of his word into the World, ſhall we be ſo notoriouſly ungrateful as *to hide it under a buſhel*, and by not ſetting it up to the greateſt advantage, deprive ourſelves of the moſt excellent and neceſſary means of divine knowledge? No, let us frequently and conſiderately ſearch the Concluſion.

holy Scriptures, and endeavour to peruſe them with the ſame ſpirit and temper by which they were dictated. Let us treat them as the oracles of God, with all reverence and ſubmiſſion of mind to the doctrine therein reveal'd: And to interpret them with that candor and ſimplicity which is due to the ſincere declarations of God, intended for the inſtruction, and not for the deception and deluſion of men; let us in a word, take all our doctrines and opinions from thoſe clear fountains of truth, and then we ſhall to our everlaſting ſatisfaction find, that they contain all things neceſſary to be believ'd and practis'd, in order to our eternal ſalvation.

The PRAYER.

O *Bleſſed Lord, and moſt merciful Father! who out of thine inexhauſtible fountain of mercy and compaſſion, has contributed to our progreſs and encouragement in chriſtian virtues, by the admirable example of thy bleſſed Evangeliſt St.* Mark: *Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that I may in conformity to his pattern, make it the ſtudy of my whole life to tread in the ſteps of my dear Redeemer, and even diſregard my own life unto death, that I may preſerve it unto life eternal. O let me daily advance in ſpiritual perfection, and attain to the higheſt degree of mercy and favour with thee my God: And whatever I want of outward comforts, let it be ſupplied by the plentiful communications of divine grace, the inward refreſhments and unſpeakable conſolations of thy bleſſed Spirit. And ſince, O merciful Lord! thou haſt given me thy Goſpel, to be a* light unto my feet, *and a* lanthorn to my paths, *O do thou enable me heartily to believe, and throughly to conſider it; let me not deviate from thoſe glad tidings of ſalvation, or fruſtrate*

ſtrate any of thy gracious deſigns of love; but grant, that I may by patience and comfort of thy holy word, embrace and ever hold faſt the bleſſed hope of everlaſting life, which thou haſt given me in my Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; *who liveth and reigneth with thee and the* Holy Ghoſt, *ever one God, world without end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who haſt inſtructed thy holy Church with the heavenly doctrine of thy Evangeliſt St. *Mark*; give me grace, that being not like a child carried away with every blaſt of vain doctrine, I may be eſtabliſhed in the truth of thy holy Goſpel, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning Pſalms. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
Evening. 6, 7, 8.

St. PHILIP's AND St. JAMES's DAY.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. Eccleſ. 7. 2. Joh. 1. v. 23.
Evening. 1. Leſſ. Eccl. 9. 2. Jude.

St. Philip's *Birth-place.*

ST. *Philip* the Apoſtle, was a native of *Beth-ſaida*, a Town bordering upon the Sea of *Tiberias*. The ſacred Story affords us no account of his parents or relations: Tho' he was in all probability a fiſher-man, and certainly the only Diſciple that was the conſtant companion and follower of our Saviour, from the firſt time of his call. His education (as *Metaphraſtes* affirms) was very excellent, and he was admirably verſed in the writings of *Moſes* and the Prophets. He made religion and the care of his ſoul his great work; and was no leſs remarkable for his extraordinary love and charity towards all mankind. It was he that brought *Nathanael*, a perſon of great note and eminence, to the knowledge of the *Meſſiah*, the long expected happineſs of the *Jews:* And it was he to whom the *Gentile* proſelytes made their application, when they had a great curioſity to ſee the Saviour of the World. What part of the Earth fell to his lot, in the diviſion made by the Apoſtles, we have no very certain authentick account; but it is the probable conjecture of ſome, that upper *Aſia* was his province; where having for many years applied himſelf with indefatigable diligence and induſtry, to recover men out of the ſnare of the Devil, to the embracing and acknowledgment of the truth, he at laſt came to *Hierapolis*,

His preaching the Goſpel *in upper* Aſia.

Hierapolis, a rich and populous City in *Phrygia*, where obſerving the inhabitants of that place to pay their adoration to a Serpent, or Dragon, of prodigious bulk, our Apoſtle was very much troubled and exaſperated, and continually ſollicited the great God of Heaven and Earth, that he would cauſe the Deſtruction of the creature. The ſucceſs was, that the Serpent diſappear'd, and after that, by the conſtancy of his preaching and the efficacy of his miracles, he gain'd numerous converts. This ſo enrag'd the magiſtrates, that nothing leſs than his death would ſerve their turn; as a prologue to which, they caus'd him to be inhumanely ſcourg'd, and then to be crucify'd; or, as ſome ſay, to be hang'd by the neck againſt a pillar. We are farther told, that at his execution, there was a ſudden earthquake, which when the people apprehended and bewailed, as an evident act of divine vengeance purſuing them for their Sins, it immediately ceas'd. The Apoſtle being dead, his body was taken down by St. *Bartholomew*, and his ſiſter *Mariamne*; and then decently buried. Thus much in relation to St. *Philip*.

His coming to Hierapolis.

And ſucceſs.

His Martyrdom.

And Burial.

St. *James* the leſs, was probably, the Son of *Joſeph*, (afterwards husband to the bleſſed Virgin) by a former wife, hence reputed the *brother of our Lord*, in the ſame ſenſe that our Lord was reputed the Son of *Joſeph*: Or as others ſay couſin-german of our Lord. As to the place of his birth, and his profeſſion, we find no intimations in the hiſtory of the Goſpel, nor have we any diſtinct account concerning him, during our Saviour's life. After the reſurrection, our bleſſed Lord appear'd to him in particular: For, as St. [b] *Hierom* out of the *He-*

S. James's Kindred *and* Relations.

Our Saviour's *particular appearance to* him.

[b] Hieron. *de Scrip. Eccl. in* Jacob. *Min.*

brew Goſpel of the *Nazarens* tells us) St. *James* (after he had drank of the cup, at the inſtitution of the laſt ſupper) ſolemnly ſwore that he would not eat Bread again till he ſaw the *Lord* riſen from the dead. Our *Lord* therefore being returned from the grave, appeared to him, ſaying, "Bring hither bread and a table; and "he took the bread, and bleſſed, and brake it, "and gave it to *James the Juſt*, and ſaid unto "him, my Brother, eat thy bread, for the "Son of Man is riſen from among them that "ſleep. After the aſcenſion of our Saviour, St. *James* was choſen Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, being preferr'd before all the reſt, for his near relation to *Chriſt*; and *Jeruſalem* being the Mother of all other Churches, it rendred *James* ſo honourable in the opinion of many of the ancients, that they gave him the title of the Head and Biſhop of the Apoſtles. And in the famous council of *Jeruſalem* ſummoned about the *Jewiſh* converts (Acts xv.) we find him of ſuch authority, as that in the preſence of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, and the reſt of the Apoſtles, he paſſes the definitive ſentence, and is notoriouſly head of the Aſſembly. (v. 19.) He was extraordinary diligent and careful in the adminiſtration of his epiſcopal office, bringing over many to a compliance with the chriſtian faith: But the greater ſucceſs he had therein, the more it awaken'd the ſpight and malice of his enemies to conſpire his ruin, eſpecially becauſe they could not have their will of St. *Paul*, by reaſon of his appeal to *Cæſar*; and not being able to effect their deſign under *Feſtus* his government, they reſolv'd to diſpatch him before the arrival of *Albinus* the new governor. To this end, *Ananus* (a bold and daring *Saducee*) call'd a council of the chief men of the *Jews*, who were enemies to Chriſtianity. *James*, and

He is made Biſhop *of* Jeruſalem.

And preſides in the famous Coun il there.

His Enemies *conſpire againſt him.*

and ſeveral others, were brought before this council, and arraign'd and condemn'd as violaters of the law. But becauſe they thought it not fit to proceed with open violence againſt our Apoſtle, for fear of the people, (among whom were many converts, and even the *Jews* themſelves had him in great veneration) the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* aſſaulted him another way, and by ſubtil inſinuations, thought to entrap him: *The* method *made uſe of.*
" Telling him, that the people were miſerably
" deceived, and led away with the erroneous
" opinion, that *Jeſus* was the true *Meſſiah*;
" and therefore they earneſtly deſired him, that
" he would recover them from that error by his
" word, which they were all ready to believe,
" becauſe they had a more than ordinary regard
" for his virtue and fidelity. At this time, there was an univerſal confluence to the *Paſchal* ſolemnity; wherefore, they had him advantagiouſly plac'd upon a pinnacle of the Temple, that the multitude might hear and ſee him; and then made their addreſs after this manner. " *Tell us,*
" *O* Juſtus, *whom we have all the reaſon in the*
" *world to believe, that ſeeing the people are thus*
" *generally led away with the Doctrine of* Jeſus
" *that was crucified:* Tell us, *What is this*
" *Inſtitution of the crucified* Jeſus? To which *His undaunted profeſſion of* Chriſt.
the Apoſtle made anſwer with an audible voice;
" *Why do ye enquire of* Jeſus *the Son of Man?*
" *He ſits in Heaven, on the right hand of the Ma-*
" *jeſty on high, and will come again in the clouds of*
" *Heaven.* Hereupon, the people below were confirm'd in the truth of Chriſtianity, and openly proclamed *Hoſannah to the Son of* David. This exaſperated the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who reſolv'd to diſpatch him immediately, that his ſad fate might terrify others from believing his doctrine; ſo ſuddenly crying out, *That* Juſtus *himſelf*

His Martyrdom.

ſelf was ſeduc'd, and become an impoſtor. They threw him down from the place where he ſtood. But miraculouſly eſcaping death, and recovering ſtrength enough to get upon his knees, he implor'd the divine mercy to forgive thoſe his enemies and perſecutors; becauſe they *knew not what they did.* But they, reſolv'd to proſecute what they had begun, fell freſh upon the poor remainders of his life, and while he was praying for them, they barbarouſly ſton'd him, till at laſt one put an end to his miſery, by knocking out his brains with a Fuller's club.

St. James the Leſs, *why ſo ſtyl'd.*

Thus died this good man St. *James* in the xcvi. Year of his age. He was probably ſurnam'd *The Leſs*, from the ſtature of his body, and to diſtinguiſh him from *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, who was of a greater height and bulk, and was therefore call'd *Major*; but our Apoſtle acquir'd a more tranſcendent appellation, by his admirable holineſs, incomparable faith, and ſtupendious ſelf-denial: For, he was call'd *the Juſt*, in a very emphatical ſenſe of that appellation. He was a Man (if I may take leave to illuſtrate his character in the language of an elegant writer) of exemplary and extraordinary piety and devotion: prayer was his conſtant buſineſs and delight; he ſeem'd to live upon it, and to trade in nothing but the frequent returns of converſe with Heaven: And was therefore wont to retire alone into the Temple to pray, which he always perform'd kneeling, and with the greateſt reverence, till by his daily devotions, his knees were become as hard and brawny as a Camel's. And he, who has told us, that *the effectual fervent Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*, himſelf found it true by his own experience; Heaven lending a more immediate ear to his petitions; ſo that when in a time of great drought

His exemplary piety.

he

he pray'd for rain, the Heavens preſently melted into fruitful ſhowers. Nor was his charity towards men leſs than his piety towards God; he did good to all, watch'd over mens ſouls, and ſtudied to advance their eternal intereſts. He was of a meek, humble Temper; honouring what was excellent in others, concealing what was valuable in himſelf: The eminency of his relation, and the dignity of his place did not exalt him in lofty thoughts above the meaſures of his Brethren, induſtriouſly hiding whatever might ſet him up above the reſt. His temperance was admirable, he wholly abſtain'd from fleſh, and drank neither wine nor ſtrong drink. His holy and mortified mind was content with the meaneſt accommodations; and in a word, he was a man of that divine temper, that he was the love and wonder of his age; and for the reputation of his holy and religious life, he was deſervedly ſtyl'd *James the Juſt*. There is generally received for authentick only one *Epiſtle* of his writing, ſuppos'd to have been written a little before his martyrdom, as having ſome paſſages relating to the downfal of the *Jewiſh* Nation.

Charity.

Meekneſs.

Temperance.

And heavenly mindedneſs.

His writings.

MEDITATIONS FOR S. PHILIP'S *and* S. James's DAY.

Epiſtle. James 1. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 13.

Goſpel. John 14. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 15.

AMongſt the various inſtances of chriſtian charity, there is not any one more acceptable to God, nor more advantageous to man, than to *inſtruct the ignorant*. Nay, it is an act of the higheſt

higheſt and nobleſt charity; for he that teaches another, gives an alms to his ſoul; he cloaths the nakedneſs of his underſtanding, and relieves the wants of his impoveriſh'd reaſon. It is a benefaction, that gives a man a kind of prerogative, and makes him ſhine like the *Baptiſt*, with a clear and ſtrong light. And as it is a work, thus noble and illuſtrious; an exerciſe, thus commendable and magnificent; ſo it is alſo the duty of every chriſtian: For where God Almighty gives a talent of knowledge, he requires that it ſhould flow plentifully, and ſtamp the endowments of a meaner underſtanding with the ſame luſtre and authority. This our Apoſtle St. *Philip* was very ſenſible of, which made him become ſucceſsful, bright and victorious in the performance of this great work. No ſooner had religion taken poſſeſſion of his mind, but like an active principle it began to ferment, and diffuſe itſelf. Away he goes, and finds *Nathanael*; and acquainted him with the glad tidings of the long-expected *Meſſiah*; and conducts him to him: He admoniſh'd him of his duty, and directed him to the beſt means and helps of knowledge. And certainly, it muſt be allow'd a very glorious thing, to have been the repairer of a decay'd intellect, and a ſub-worker to grace, in freeing it from the incumbrances of ſin. It is a ſublime and exalted act of charity, to inſtil good counſel into men, and to raiſe their minds to the conſideration of divine things. And this is a duty which every man owes to another, as he hath opportunity; but particularly to thoſe who are under our care and tuition: Thoſe over whom we have a ſpecial authority, and a more immediate influence. When therefore, we know any perſons to be groſly ignorant of God and religion, we

It is the duty of a Chriſtian *to inſtruct the* ignorant.

The excellency thereof.

we ought (in imitation of this bleſſed Saint) to uſe our utmoſt endeavour to inſtruct and reform them: And if they are in our power (as our children and our ſervants are) we are indiſpenſably bound to inſtruct them in the doctrines of the chriſtian faith, and to ſeaſon their minds with all thoſe principles of religion, which are neceſſary to conduct them to everlaſting happineſs.

But withal, it is to be conſider'd that we are not to rely upon our own ſtrength in this matter, but muſt add our hearty and conſtant prayers to Almighty God, that he would be pleas'd to accompany our endeavours to that end, with his powerful aſſiſtance and bleſſing; without which, all that we can do, will prove ineffectual. Accordingly, St. *Philip*, when he found that he could not, by continued inſtructions, reclaim the inhabitants of *Hierapolis*, from their idolatrous devotions; he made his addreſſes to Heaven, till at laſt he procur'd the death of their beloved Deity, and by this means, many became converts to Chriſtianity. Great importunity in prayer ſeldom fails of a gracious anſwer. *Monica* (the mother of St. *Auſtin*) by the conſtancy and fervency of her devotions, obtain'd of God, the converſion of her ſon, [a] who prov'd afterwards a great and glorious inſtrument of good to the Church. Thus we ſee that our prayers are one of the greateſt and beſt expreſſions of our charity, and therefore ought to be as large and extenſive as our charity. Thoſe who are in the loweſt condition, may do good to others by their prayers, which they are capable of performing at all times and upon all occaſions. An inſtance hereof, we have in St. *James the*

Prayer *for others, the efficacy thereof.*

[a] Fieri non poteſt ut filias tot lacrymarum pereat. *Ambroſ.*

leſs,

leſs, who by his frequent addreſſes unto Heaven, procur'd God Almighty's favour, in cauſing it to rain upon the Earth, in a time of great drought and ſcarcity: And indeed, he made choice of the propereſt inſtrument to bring down God's bleſſings upon the world. So that, in ſhort, prayer is that by which a man engages all the auxiliaries of omnipotence it ſelf on his behalf. And no doubt, but (as St. *James* tells us) the *fervent prayer of a righteous Man availeth much.* (Jam. v. 17.) The interceſſion of thoſe who are in favour with God (as all good men are) is many times effectual to procure that good for others, which their own endeavours could never have affected and brought about.

Prayer *for* enemies, *the excellency there-of.*

Thus we may plainly ſee, that to pray for others, is a great and a noble act of charity; but above all, to pray for our enemies is certainly the greateſt, the brighteſt, and moſt ſtupendious inſtance of this virtue! It is the higheſt perfection that humane nature can reach unto, and may, in a proper ſenſe, be ſaid to reach up to Heaven; it being an imitation of the divine goodneſs, which ſhines upon the heads and rains upon the fields of the ſinful and unjuſt, and heaps bleſſings upon thoſe who are buſy only to heap up wrath to themſelves. Prayer for a man's ſelf and friends, is indeed a beneficial duty; but to pray for our enemies is an heroick action; and ſuch an one as entitles a man to the bleſſings of both worlds. It was doubtleſs an excellent diſpoſition improv'd by a mighty grace, that could make St. *James the Leſs* utter a paſſionate prayer for the forgiveneſs of his enemies, whilſt they were barbarouſly ſtoning him to death. He found himſelf incapable of doing good enough for his murderers; and therefore he calls in the aſſiſtance of Heaven, and engages omnipotence to compleat

compleat the kindneſs: As he was juſt *committing his own ſoul into the hands of a faithful Creator*; he repair'd to the ſame infinite Being for the pardon and preſervation of thoſe that ſlew him. See, what it is to die for the ſake of *Chriſt*, and to be reſolute in a good cauſe! It gives a man a glorious reputation, and embalms his memory to eternal ages. Such a perſon gives a clear demonſtration that he *values the loving kindneſs of God, more than life*, and fears no evil, but only ſin and damnation. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, imagin'd that they had found out an admirable expedient to make St. *James* renounce the profeſſion of Chriſtianity: They plac'd him upon a pinnacle of the Temple, thinking that the immediate proſpect of death would baffle his courage and conſtancy: But he, on the contrary, boldly proclaimed his crucified Saviour, and arm'd himſelf with reſolution and patience againſt the fierceſt aſſaults of his moſt inveterate enemies. He ſatisfied himſelf with the joyful and victorious reflexions of a life well ſpent, and valued not the greateſt torments that malice could ſuggeſt: For he was ſenſible that his enemies could only *kill the body*; that is, they could knock off his fetters, and open the priſon-doors, and ſet him at liberty: They could kill him in the cauſe of God, and in the diſcharge of his duty; that is, they could add to his happineſs, and brighten his crown and increaſe his weight of glory.

God *to be fear'd more than* Man.

And now certainly, every man that underſtands himſelf, and the juſt value of his immortal ſoul (a Being of ineſtimable worth) will *hold faſt the profeſſion of his faith without wavering*, (Heb. x. 23.) againſt all the cunning arts and inſinuations of buſy and deceitful men, whoſe deſign it is to unhinge men from their religion, and

and to gain proſelytes to their party and faction. To ſuffer for the cauſe of God, and his truth, with courage and patience, is one of the nobleſt of all the chriſtian virtues; and conſequently ſhall be rewarded with a proportionable degree of glory. Let us not then be diſhearten'd and caſt down at the apprehenſion of ſuffering for the truth; but let us fortify our ſelves with the conſideration of St. *James*'s martyrdom, that if ever the Almighty ſhould honour us ſo far as to call us to *ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake*, we may be ſo true to God, to religion, and to our own ſouls, as to endure all with reſignation and patience; entirely committing our perſons and concerns, to the all-wiſe and unerring providence of that infinite Being; who in all the troubles and diſturbances, all the croſs, difficult and perplexing paſſages that can befal us, will be ſure to guide all to this happy iſſue: *That every thing ſhall work together for good, to thoſe that love God.*

Concluſion.

The PRAYER.

O *Bleſſed Lord, and moſt merciful Father, who art infinitely pleas'd in the demonſtrations of thy mercy, and haſt given the cleareſt revelations of thy divine will and pleaſure, in order to our everlaſting ſalvation: Grant, O Lord! that I may make a right uſe of all thy gracious diſpenſations towards me, and that I may improve every opportunity of grace to thy glory, and the benefit and advantage of others. Inſtruct me, O Lord, in all the particulars of my duty, and give me ſuch a meaſure of thy Heavenly grace and wiſdom, as may render me uſeful and inſtrumental for the publick good. O*

preſerve

preſerve in me a great compaſſion, and ſincere charity towards thoſe that are in error and ignorance of thy truth; that as far as lies in my power, I may bring them to the knowledge of it, and conduct them in the right way which leads to thy heavenly Kingdom. Forgive, O thou great lover of Souls! all that have done me any injury, and aſſiſt them with thy grace, that they may for the future, make better uſe of thoſe talents and opportunities wherewith thou haſt entruſted them. Finally, O Lord! I beg of thee, that I may hold faſt the profeſſion of my faith without wavering, *againſt all the temptations and terrors of the world; that when I come to die, I may be made* partaker of the inheritance of the Saints in light; *and eternally ſing hymns of praiſe to Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, who liveth and reigneth, one God, World with end.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! whom truly to know is everlaſting life: Grant me perfectly to know thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, to be the way, the truth, and the life; that following the ſteps of thy holy Apoſtles, St. *Philip* and St. *James*, I may ſtedfaſtly walk in the way that leadeth to eternal life, thro' the ſame, thy Son, *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm 56, 57, 58. *Evening.* 59, 60. 61.

St. BARNABAS's-DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. *Ecc.* 10. 2. *Act.* 14. *Evening.* *Ecc.* 12. 2. *Act.* 15. to v. 33.

St. Barnabas *his* Country *and* Parentage.

ST. *Barnabas* was born in *Cyprus*, a noted Iſland in the *Mediterranean* Sea. He was deſcended of the tribe of *Levi*, and his parents being rich and pious, ſent him to *Jeruſalem*, and committed him to the care and tuition of *Rabban Gamaliel*, a great Doctor of the law; at whoſe Feet he was brought up, together with St. *Paul*, *Act.* xiii. 1. His proper name was

His name Joſes.

Joſes, given him at his circumciſion, to which after his embracing Chriſtianity, the Apoſtles added that of *Barnabas*, either implying him a *Son of Prophecy*, eminent for his prophetick gifts and endowments; or denoting him a *Son of Conſolation*, for his admirable art in comforting troubled conſciences, or his extraordinary charity in refreſhing the bowels of the Saints. He had a conſiderable eſtate in land, and finding that the neceſſities of the Church requir'd it, he generouſly ſold it, *and laid the money at the Apoſtles feet*, to be diſpos'd of by them according to the exigencies of the poor, *Act.* iv. 37.

His generous Charity.

He introduces St. Paul *into the ſociety of the* Apoſtles.

Not long after St. *Paul*'s converſion, our Apoſtle meets with him at *Jeruſalem*, and introduces him into the ſociety and fellowſhip of the Apoſtles, which otherwiſe he had ſought in vain. For, the Chriſtians univerſally ſhunn'd his company; having had ſufficient experience of his rage and cruelty, and being ſtill diſſatisfied as to the reality of his change. But *Barnabas* put a greater

a greater confidence in his ſincerity, introduc'd him to the Apoſtles, and declar'd to them the manner of his converſion, and what ſignal evidences he had given of it at *Damaſcus*, in his bold and reſolute diſputations with the *Jews*, Acts ix. 27.

Some time after this, ſeveral *Cyprian* and *Cyrenean* converts went to *Antioch*, where by their preaching the Goſpel, many were brought over to the chriſtian faith. This happy news was gladly receiv'd by the Apoſtles at *Jeruſalem*, who preſently ſent down *Barnabas*, to confirm them in that excellent religion they had entertain'd. When he came, he beheld with joy unutterable the marvellous operations that God's grace had on the inhabitants of that place; but finding that he had great occaſion for a co-adjutor in the work, by reaſon of the populouſneſs of that great City, he went to *Paul* at *Tarſus*, and brings him along with him to *Antioch*; where they both ſpent a whole year in preaching the Goſpel, by which means there were added multitudes of new converts to the faith.

Paul *and* Barnabas *confirm the* Chriſtians *of* Antioch.

About this time, it happen'd that a ſevere famine preſſed upon the Provinces of the *Roman* Empire, and eſpecially *Judea*, whereby the Chriſtians were reduc'd to great extremities. Hereupon the Church of *Antioch* made very conſiderable contributions, and intruſted the money with *Barnabas* and *Paul*, that they might ſee to the diſpoſal of it as neceſſity did require. Having faithfully diſcharg'd their truſt, they return'd to *Antioch*, and brought along with them *John*, ſir-nam'd *Mark*.

They are employ'd to relieve the Chriſtians *in* Judea.

While they were at *Antioch*, ſome of the Prophets, by inſpiration, commanded that *Barnabas* and *Paul* ſhould be ſet apart to that peculiar miniſtry, to which God had deſign'd them:

And ſo having faſted and pray'd, hands were ſolemnly laid upon them, to denote their particular deſignation to that ſervice; after which they enter'd upon the work which the Holy Ghoſt had call'd them to, which was to preach the Goſpel to the *Gentile* world. And taking *Mark* along with them as their companion and attendant, they firſt betook themſelves to *Seleucia*; from thence they went to *Salamis*, a chief City of *Cyprus*. From *Salamis* they went to *Paphos*, and from thence to *Perga* in *Pamphylia*; at which place, *Mark* being weary of ſuch an itinerant courſe of life, to the great grief of his kinſman *Barnabas*, refus'd any longer to contribute his ſervice to the miniſtry of the Goſpel, and ſo went home to *Jeruſalem*. The two Apoſtles went on in their journey, and came to *Antioch* in *Piſidia*, where they preached to the *Jews* in their Synagogue. Thence they paſſed to *Iconium*, where the *Jews* conſpir'd to ſtone them, and ſo they were forc'd to make their eſcape by flying into *Lyſtra* and *Derbe*. From *Derbe* they return'd back to *Lyſtra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch*; and ſo through *Piſidia* to *Pamphylia*; thence from *Perga* to *Attalia*; and ſo return'd again to *Antioch* in *Syria*, the place from whence they firſt ſet out; in which travels they had converted many to the faith, and made way for the propagation of Chriſtianity in the *Gentile* world.

Their travels thro' ſeveral Countries.

St. *Paul* ſome time after, being deſirous to reviſit the Churches which they had planted where they travelled, *Barnabas* conſented to the propoſal. But he was reſolved to take his couſin *John Mark* along with him, hoping he would have for the future, a firmer conſtancy, and a more perſevering courage. *Paul*, would by no means allow of it, taking his departure from

from them at *Pamphylia*, as an evidence of his insincerity, and unfitness for that service for the future. Neither of them would break their resolution, which caus'd them to pursue different courses, and so they parted: *Barnabas* took *Mark*, and sail'd to *Cyprus*; and *Paul* took *Silas*, and went into *Syria* and *Cilicia*, confirming the Churches.

The dissension between Barnabas *and* Paul.

This is all that we know concerning the Apostle St. *Barnabas*; what became of him afterwards we have no certain account. He is said to have suffer'd martyrdom, being ston'd by the *Jews* at *Salamis*, and to have been buried by his kinsman *Mark*, within a quarter of a mile of that City. Certain it is, that the christian Church had a mighty loss in so useful and excellent a person. For, his soul (says an elegant Historian) was richly furnish'd with all divine graces and virtues; a profound humility, diffusive charity, firm faith, an immoveable constancy, and an unconquerable patience; a mighty zeal, and an unweary'd diligence in the propagating of Christianity, and for the good of souls. So entirely did he devote himself to an uninterrupted diligence, so continually was he employ'd in running up and down from place to place, that he could find little leisure to leave many writings behind him for the benefit of the Church. It is allow'd that he wrote an Epistle to the *Jewish* Converts, which was of great repute among the Ancients, and sometimes read in the christian Churches; nor is it doubted by the generality of learned men whether this be the same with that which bears his name at this day, tho' by the injury of time the beginning of it is lost in the original language in which it was written: However it was never admitted into the Canon of the holy Scripture.

St. Barnabas *his* Martyrdom.

His excellent Temper *described.*

His Epistle.

For the Epiſtle. Acts 11. from v. 22. to the end.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. BARNABAS's DAY.

Goſpel. John 15. from v. 12. to v. 17.

WHEN the great and wiſe Creator of Heaven and Earth, had made this glorious fabrick of the World, and all the creatures contain'd in it; he ſurvey'd the works of creation, and left this general impreſs or character upon them: *That they were exceeding good.* (Gen. i.) He made man his immediate deputy upon Earth, and committed to his charge ſeveral talents and advantages, to be improv'd to the end for which they were deſign'd; that is, to relieve the wants of his fellow-creatures, and to ſerve the great ends of religion and virtue. Man was not made for himſelf alone, but for the benefit and ſupport of thoſe who ſtand in need of his aſſiſtance; and God Almighty expects that we ſhould every one contribute what we are able towards each others happineſs. He deſigns the welfare of all his creatures, and hath made all the proviſions for it, that are neceſſary in order thereunto: And tho' he expoſes ſome perſons to poverty and want, for moſt wiſe and merciful ends, yet he puts it into the power of others to aſſiſt and comfort them; and expects they ſhould employ that power to no other end. When divine Providence doth bleſs any man with a plentiful fortune, it is his indiſpenſable duty, to employ it in acts of charity. St. *Barnabas* ſold his eſtate, to miniſter to the exigencies of the poor; and tho' we are not ty'd down to the proportion, yet God Almighty gives us our riches in truſt, and ſo much as we need, is ours; but beyond what will ſupport us, and be a con-

The Goodneſs *of* God *in providing for the welfare of his* Creatures.

Rich men *their proper* employment.

a convenient proviſion for our families, is not ours. We are indeed the proprietors of it, in reſpect of men; but in reſpect of God, we are but truſtees and ſtewards; and conſequently, if we laviſh out upon our own pleaſures and luxuries, that power to relieve the miſerable with which he hath intruſted us, we are unfaithful ſtewards to our truſt, and reſponſible to him for all their miſeries. The wiſeſt uſe therefore, we can make of our eſtates, will be to do like thoſe who traffick in foreign parts; to conſign them into our own native country; to ſend our treaſures before us into the other world, that we may have the benefit of them when we come there: and this we may do by alms and charity. So our bleſſed Saviour aſſures us, that *by giving alms, we provide our ſelves bags, which wax not old; a treaſure in the Heavens, which faileth not.* For though our eſtates will not follow us into the other world, our good works will; though we cannot carry our riches along with us, yet we may ſend them before us, to make way for our reception into everlaſting habitations. (Luke xii. 23.) *Extra fortunam eſt quicquid donatur:* Whatſoever we give to the poor is ſafely diſpos'd of, and put out of the reach of Fortune, becauſe it is laid up in Heaven, where we may expect the return and recompence of it. Let us not then *lay up for our ſelves treaſures upon Earth*, but rather endeavour to be rich towards God. Let us reſolve to do good with what we have whilſt we can; and to that end, let us lay aſide ſome part of what God hath bleſſed us withal, for the uſes of piety and charity, and let it bear ſome decent proportion to what God hath given us. For this is a moſt eſſential part of religion, and upon the performance or neglect of

Riches *how laid up for us in the other* World.

this duty, our everlasting happiness doth depend.

But besides this duty of ministring to the necessities of the poor, we are indispensably oblig'd by the rules of Christianity, to use our utmost power and endeavours for the benefit of mankind in every particular. St. *Barnabas*, not only sold his estate for charitable uses, but made it his great business, and constant employment to comfort troubled consciences, and to propagate Christianity in the World. He was also very eminent and remarkable for reconciling differences, and rectifying mistakes between man and man. He introduc'd St. *Paul* into the society of the Apostles, who before unanimously shunn'd his company, thinking him not fit for humane converse. And certainly, it must be acknowledg'd a noble and a great thing, to cover the blemishes, and to excuse the failings of a friend; to draw a curtain before his stains, and to display his perfections; to bury his weaknesses in silence, and to proclaim his virtues upon the house top: For this is no less than an imitation of the charities of Heaven, and one of the most illustrious instances of a sincere friendship. But, how does this excellent example of St. *Barnabas* upbraid those who live in a direct contradiction to it; who instead of *going about doing good*, are perpetually intent upon *doing mischief?* Such men know not the ravishing and transporting delights which attend a good action; if they did, they needed not to be courted to it by persuasion, nor urg'd by importunity. There is no sensual pleasure in the World, comparable to the delight and satisfaction that a good man takes in doing good. This *Cato* in *Tully* boasts of, as the great comfort and joy of his old age, *That nothing was more pleasant to him,*

To do Good, wherein it consists.

The excellency of this Duty.

Motives to do Good.

him, than the conſcience of a well-ſpent life, and the remembrance of many benefits and kindneſſes done to others. And this is that which will give us the greateſt comfort when we come to die. All the honour and grandeur that we have acquir'd; the great eſtates and poſſeſſions that we have induſtriouſly heap'd together, will then ſtand us in no ſtead; but the conſcience of well-doing will refreſh our ſouls, even under the very pangs of death.

Let us then, do all the good that poſſibly we can, whilſt we have opportunity. We are here but ſtrangers and pilgrims, "for when I leave "this World, (ſays [d] *Tully*, in his excellent diſ- "courſe concerning old age) I look upon my "ſelf as departing out of an Inn, and not as "quitting mine home and habitation; Nature "having aſſign'd this World to us as a place to "ſojourn, but not to dwell in. Our immortal ſouls, which are by far the moſt noble and excellent part of our ſelves, are the natives of Heaven, *Sedes ubi fata quietas oſtendunt*, where a quiet habitation, and a perpetual reſt, is deſign'd and prepar'd for them. Let us then (in imitation of this bleſſed Saint) ſerve God diligently, and faithfully improve the talents, which are committed to us, to our great Maſter's advantage; that when he comes to call us to an account, and finds that we have done ſo, we may not fail to receive both his approbation and reward. Concluſion.

[d] Ex vitâ iſtâ diſcedo, tanquam ex hoſpitio, non tanquam ex domo; commorandi enim natura diverſorium nobis, non habitandi dedit. *Tully de Senect.*

The

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty God! by whoſe ſpecial grace, thy ſervant St.* Barnabas, *adorn'd the Goſpel of* Chriſt *in an admirable courſe of holy living: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that his example may have ſuch an extraordinary influence upon me, that I may put in practice all thoſe excellent virtues which were conſpicuous in him. Diſpoſe me, O Lord! to the love and exerciſe of kindneſs and mercy; that I may have a tender fellow-feeling of my brethren's afflictions; and apply my ſelf chearfully to rectify their miſtakes, to relieve their miſeries, to ſupply their wants, to comfort their Sorrows, and to be ready upon all occaſions to contribute to their relief; ſo that, by improving all thoſe talents wherewith thou haſt entruſted me to the beſt advantage, I may make daily advances in ſpiritual perfection, and attain to an exalted high pitch of grace and favour with thee my God. Thou, O bleſſed Father! art the fountain and original of all goodneſs, and the whole creation furniſhes us with clear evidences, and plentiful demonſtrations of it; grant me therefore, I beg of thee, thoſe qualifications and diſpoſitions which are neceſſary in order thereunto; that I may go on with an uninterrupted perſeverance in goodneſs, till thou haſt wrought me up to a reſemblance of thy beauty, and eſtabliſh'd me for ever in the glories of thy bleſſed preſence; through the merits and mediation of* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Lord God Almighty! who didſt endue thy holy Apoſtle *Barnabas*, with ſingular gifts of the holy Ghoſt: Leave me not, I beſeech thee, deſtitute of thy manifold gifts; nor yet of grace to uſe them alway to thy honour and glory, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen*.

St.

Morning Pſalm 116, 117, 118. *Evening.* 119. *par.*

St. John Baptist's Day.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Mal. 3. 2. Mat. 3. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Mal. 4. 2. Mat. 14, *to* v. 13.

John *the* Baptiſt's Parentage.

THERE was among the *Jews*, a certain eminent prieſt of *Judea*, nam'd *Zacharias*, who, with his wife *Elizabeth*, of the ſame tribe of *Levi*, and the progeny of *Aaron*, were celebrated for their unſpotted lives; and ſhe was under the reproach of barrenneſs, being then ancient and paſt hopes of iſſue. But, it came to paſs, as *Zacharias* was one day miniſtring in the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, on a ſudden, an Angel from Heaven appear'd to him on the north ſide of the altar of incenſe, at which he was exceedingly ſurpriz'd. The Angel immediately ſaid unto him, *Fear not*, Zacharias, *for thy prayer is heard*; *and thy wife* Elizabeth *ſhall bear thee a ſon, and thou ſhalt call his name* John. *And thou ſhalt have joy and gladneſs, and many ſhall rejoice at his birth. For, he ſhall be great in the ſight of the Lord, and ſhall drink neither wine nor ſtrong drink; and he ſhall be fill'd with the Holy Ghoſt, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of* Iſrael *ſhall he turn to the Lord their God. And he ſhall go before him in the Spirit, and the power of* Elias, *to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* (Luke i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.) *Zacharias* had ſcarce faith enough to digeſt this promiſe, becauſe he thought it beyond the courſe of nature, both he and his

The Angel Gabriel *appears to* Zacharias.

wife

wife being ſo very ancient; and therefore, he deſir'd the Angel to ſatisfy him as to the truth of it. Whereupon, the Angel told him, that he ſhould be miraculouſly ſtruck dumb, and ſhould not be able to ſpeak, till what he had reveal'd ſhould come to paſs; the ſame miracle at once confirming his faith and puniſhing his infidelity. Accordingly, he became ſpeechleſs, and *Elizabeth* conceiv'd with child, and as if the babe would do part of his errand before he was born, he *leap'd in her womb*, at her ſalutation of the *Virgin Mary*, then newly conceiv'd with child of our bleſſed Saviour.

John *the* Baptiſt's Birth.

Theſe preſages were not vain or fallible, for when *Elizabeth*'s time was expir'd, ſhe was deliver'd of a Son, which became very eminent and remarkable for the admirable ſtrictneſs and auſterity of his life. He was circumcis'd the eighth day, and they gave him the name of *John*, according to the prediction of the Angel; at which time *Zacharias* had his ſpeech reſtor'd to him, and being inſpir'd with a prophetick Spirit, he brake out with, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of* Iſrael, *for he hath viſited and redeemed his people*, &c. When the child was about eighteen months old, [e] his mother *Elizabeth* carried him into the deſerts of *Judea*, to avoid the fury of *Herod*, who at that time was deſtroying all the children at or near *Bethlehem*. But, it happened ſoon after, that his mother died, and his father was kill'd in the court of the Temple, as ſome ſay; ſo that the child was expos'd to all the dangers and infelicities of an orphan, in a place of ſolitarineſs and diſcomfort, and in a time when a bloody King endeavoured his deſtruction. But, when his natural parents were

His auſtere Education.

[e] Niceph. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 14.

remov'd,

removʼd, God became his more immediate guardian, for according to the tradition to the [f] *Greeks*, the Almighty deputed an Angel to be his nouriſher and protector. And being thus brought up in the wilderneſs, his manners and way of living were very agreeable to his education. His Garments borrowʼd from no other wardrobe than the backs of wild beaſts; he wore *camels hair*, [g] and a *leathern girdle about his loins*, and his *meat was locuſts and wild honey: Locuſts*, accounted the meaneſt ſort of food; and *wild honey*, ſuch as the natural artifice and labour of the Bees had ſtorʼd up in caverns and hollow trees, without any elaborate curioſity to prepare and dreſs it up. Thus he continuʼd ſpending his time, in faſting, prayer, and contemplation, till he was thirty years of age.

And way of Life.

Preparʼd by ſo ſingular an education, and furniſhʼd with an immediate commiſſion from Heaven, he enterʼd upon the actual adminiſtration of his office: *In thoſe days came* John *the* Baptiſt, *preaching in the wilderneſs of* Judea, *ſaying, repent ye for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* He was the herald to proclaim the firſt approaches of the long-expected *Meſſiah:* He told the *Jews*, that the Son of the eternal God was come down from Heaven, and would put a period to all the types and umbrages of the *Moſaick* diſpenſation; and therefore, he deſirʼd them to break off their ſins by repentance, and by a ſerious amendment and reformation of life diſpoſe themſelves for the glad tidings of the

His Preaching.

[f] *St.* Chryſoſt. *Hom.* de *Natiw.* St. Jo. Baptiſt.

[g] Veſtis erat curvi ſetis conferta Cameli,
Contra Luxuriem molles duraret ut Artus,
Arceretque graves compuncto Corpore ſomnos.
Paulinus.

Goſpel.

Goſpel. His free and reſolute preaching, together with the extraordinary ſeverity and ſanctity of his life, procur'd him a vaſt auditory, and numerous proſelytes; for *there went out to him* Jeruſalem, *and all* Judea, *and the region round about* Jordan: Perſons of all ranks and orders, of all ſects and opinions; *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, *Soldiers* and *Publicans*, who confeſſing their ſins before God, were enter'd into this new inſtitution by baptiſm, (from whence he deriv'd his title of the *Baptiſt*) a ſolemn and uſual way among the *Jews* of initiating proſelytes to their Church and Religion. But he obtain'd ſtill a more ample teſtimony and awful commendation of his behaviour, (*Mat.* xi. 11. *Luke* vii. 28.) *Among them that are born of women, there hath not riſen a greater than John the Baptiſt.* As *John* was baptizing in *Jordan*, *Jeſus* came, and deſir'd to be baptized of him: But *John* modeſtly declin'd it, ſaying, *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comeſt thou to me?* But *Jeſus* ſaid unto him, *Suffer it to be ſo now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs:* Whereupon he admitted of the honour, and baptized *Jeſus* in the river *Jordan*. Immediately after, there was a moſt illuſtrious manifeſtation of the *Trinity*; for upon our Lord's addreſſes to Heaven, the Skies were divided with great radiancy, and the *Holy Ghoſt* viſibly deſcended upon his ſacred head, after the manner of a Dove, accompanied with the voice of the Father from Heaven, pronouncing him *to be his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed.*

His initiating Proſelytes *by* Baptiſm.

He baptizes our Saviour.

These, and many other things, did *John* the *Baptiſt*; and by his rare example of ſanctity and holy living, he prevail'd ſo much among the people, that he made fit preparation for the coming

coming of the *Meſſiah*: For he was the happy meſſenger of the evangelical tidings, and was like the Morning-ſtar; or the bluſhings ſpringing from the windows of the Eaſt, fore-telling the approach of the Sun of righteouſneſs. He was a *burning and a ſhining Light*, and very impartially cenſur'd and condemn'd the vices of the people. At laſt, he repair'd to the court of *Herod* the *Tetrarch*, and reſolutely reprov'd him, for his unlawful co-habitation with *Herodias*, his brother *Philip*'s wife. *Herod* was not immediately exaſperated at the holy man, but, on the contrary, had a great veneration for him, and followed his advice in many things: But *Herodias* highly reſented the affront; and therefore, by all the arts of feminine ſubtilty, meditates revenge. By her inſtigation, the *Baptiſt* was caſt into priſon, as the *præludium* to a ſadder fate. For King *Herod* on his birth-day, having made a magnificent entertainment, for the lords and chief Officers of his dominions, among other pleaſures and ſcenes of mirth, the daughter of *Herodias* came in, and danc'd to the admiration of the whole court. *Herod* was ſo tranſported with her, that he promis'd, (with the addition of an oath,) to grant her whatſoever ſhe demanded, tho' it amounted to the half of his dominions. Whereupon, ſhe immediately conſulted with her mother, what ſhe ſhould aſk. And her mother, being prompted by malice and revenge, bid her aſk the head of *John* the *Baptiſt*; which in all haſte ſhe requir'd of the King, in the preſence of the whole company. The King at firſt was very much ſurpriz'd, but he would not retract his promiſe, on pretence of his honour; and therefore, he commanded that *John* ſhould be beheaded, which was quickly accompliſh'd. His head was brought up

He reproves Herod.

He is impriſon'd.

His martyrdom.

up in a charger, and made a feſtival-preſent to the young girl, who gave it to her mother. And 'tis ſaid, ſhe buried it in her own palace, thinking to ſecure it againſt a re-union, leſt it ſhould again diſturb her unlawful luſts and diſquiet *Herod*'s conſcience. The body the Diſciples of *John* gather'd up, and bury'd it in *Sebaſte*, in the confines of *Samaria*, making his grave between the bodies of *Elizæus* and *Abdias* the Prophets.

For the Epiſtle. Iſa. 40. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. JOHN BAPTIST's DAY.

Goſpel. Luke 1. *from* v. 57. *to the end.*

THE birth of man is ſo truly wonderful, that it ſeems to be deſign'd for a conſtant demonſtration of the omnipotence of our Creator; and if the frequency did not abate of our admiration, it could be eſteem'd no leſs than a perpetual miracle. However, it is not a meaner act of God's power and mercy, becauſe he often repeats it; and therefore we ought gratefully to admire and adore the divine wiſdom and goodneſs in this his amazing diſpenſation towards us. But old *Zachary* was aſtoniſh'd and overwhelm'd with wonder when the heavenly meſſenger told him, that his wife ſhould conceive, and *bear a Son!* he conſider'd that they were both very aged, and that *Elizabeth* was barren; and therefore, he diſputed the truth of the Angel's promiſe, thinking it a miracle too ſtupendious to be wrought! But, *is any thing too hard for the Lord?* (ſaith God to *Abraham* in the ſame caſe.) God has the key of the womb

The birth of Man, *a ſtupendious inſtance of* God's Power.

in his own keeping, and *Zachary* gladly found it to be one of the divine prerogatives, to *make the barren woman to keep houſe, and to be a joyful mother of children.* His wife *Elizabeth* miraculouſly conceiv'd with child, and brought forth a perſon eminent and remarkable upon ſeveral accounts. He was the Morning-ſtar to the Sun of righteouſneſs; the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts; the herald and harbinger to the moſt high God. He was a bright and ſhining example of ſanctity and holy life: He liv'd thirty years among wild beaſts in the wilderneſs of *Judea*, in converſation with God; in great mortification and diſaffection to the world; his garments rugged and uneaſy; his meat plain, neceſſary and without variety; his employment prayers and devotion; and this he undertook to prepare himſelf for the great miniſtry of ſerving the holy *Jeſus* in his publick character; and that he might gain credit and reputation to the teſtimony he was to give concerning the Saviour of the World. From hence, we may learn the great virtue of ſelf-denial, which is plainly this: That we ſhould be willing to part from all terreſtrial comforts and conveniences; to quit all our temporal intereſts and enjoyments, and even life it ſelf, for the ſake of *Chriſt*, and his Religion. We cannot be the Diſciples of the holy *Jeſus*, nor be worthy to be called by his name, if we be not ready thus to deny our ſelves for his ſake. If it come to this, that we muſt either renounce him and his religion, or quit our worldly intereſts; if we be not ready to forego theſe, nay, and to part even with life it ſelf, rather than to forſake him and his truth, *we are not worthy of him.* He himſelf hath given us the moſt glorious example of ſelf-denial that ever was;

St. John Baptiſt, *his* Birth *miraculous.*

He was a great Example of Self-denial.

Self-denial, *this Duty explain'd.*

The reaſonableneſs of it.

was; in that he denied himſelf more, and ſuffer'd more grievous things, than any of us can do, and all for our ſakes! He ſtoop'd from the greateſt height and dignity, and underwent more for us, than 'tis poſſible for a mortal to expreſs or conceive! So that well might our Lord, thus going before us, command us to follow him, ſaying, *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf, and take up his croſs, and follow me.* (Mat. xvi. 24.) If we conſider our infinite obligations to God, we have no reaſon to think it much to ſacrifice to him our deareſt intereſts in this World; eſpecially, if we conſider withal how prodigiouſly great our recompence will be in the other. Our Saviour hath aſſur'd us of a glorious and eternal reward, for all our ſelf-denial and ſufferings for him; a reward infinitely beyond the proportion of our ſufferings both in the degree and duration of it. And nothing, ſurely, can be more reaſonable, than to exchange the tranſient pleaſures and enjoyments, and the imperfect felicities of this World, for the ſolid, perfect, and perpetual happineſs of eternal life. The conſideration of Heaven and the firm perſuaſion of our future happineſs, ſhould actuate all the powers of our ſouls, and be continually inſpiring us with new vigour in the ways of piety and virtue.

The reward of it.

John the *Baptiſt*, having ſpent thirty years, in a ſtrict courſe of mortification and ſelf-denial; at laſt, he came forth from his ſolitudes, preaching the doctrine of repentance, for the remiſſion of ſins. "He told the *Jews*, that "the long expected *Meſſiah* was now at hand, "and his kingdom ready to appear: That the "*Meſſiah* was coming to introduce a new and "better ſtate of things, to enlighten the World "with the cleareſt revelations of the divine

John *the* Baptiſt's Sermon *to the* Jews.

" will, and to acquaint them with counſels
" brought from the boſom of the Father: That
" the great God of Heaven and Earth, had a
" long time born with the ſins of the people,
" and would now exact fruits worthy of repen-
" tance; and therefore, he earneſtly invited and
" urg'd them to repentance, that by this means
" they might eſcape the ruin that was denoun-
" ced againſt them: And ſince the Almighty
" had given ſo fair a warning of their Saviour's
" coming, he deſir'd that they would not be
" ſurpriz'd in their careleſneſs, but appear in
" an equipage, ſuiting the greatneſs of his Ma-
" jeſty, the dearneſs of his love and the excel-
His Succeſs. " lency of his deſign that was to come. His excellent zeal in preaching, together with his admirable piety and holineſs, created ſuch extraordinary opinions of him among the people, that all held him for a Prophet in his office, for a heavenly perſon in his own particular; and a bright example of ſanctity and holy life to others. His ſingular temperance and humility prevailed mightily upon the affections and judgments of men, who with much eaſe believ'd his doctrine, when they had great reaſon to approve his life. The good example of the preacher has always the moſt commanding perſuaſion, a holy life is his beſt Sermon: It adds great weight to his counſel and doctrine, when we ſee that he adviſes nothing but what he does, nor exacts any thing of others, from which he himſelf deſires to be excuſed. As on the contrary, nothing is more uſeleſs and inſignificant than good counſel from a bad man; for who will regard or believe thoſe teachers, who give all the evidence that can be by their lives and actions, that they do not believe themſelves and their own doctrine? Who demean themſelves

Miniſters *their peculiar obligation to* Piety.

ſelves in ſuch a manner as perfectly to undermine the credit and effect of their inſtruction, by leading lives ſo diametrically oppoſite to it? A preacher therefore, ought to order his converſation after the moſt exemplary manner, and with ſtrict conduct to appear blameleſs as the ſteward of God; to be ſober, juſt, holy, temperate; without which, a miniſter's authority and doctrine will only accuſe him: For the lives and manners of the preachers are the beſt eloquence, and have that power of perſuaſion which no words, no art can equal. Let then every perſon, who has the honour to be employ'd in the ſacred function, endeavour faithfully and induſtriouſly to gain ſouls to God, and to turn *ſinners from the error of their ways*, by ſeaſonable counſel and advice, by kind and gentle reproof; but eſpecially, by a holy and exemplary converſation, and by a ſhining virtue: For, that which makes the clergy glorious, is to be knowing in their profeſſion, unſpotted in their lives, active and laborious in their charge, bold and reſolute in oppoſing ſeducers, and daring to look vice in the face, tho' never ſo flagrant and epidemical. And laſtly, to be gentle, courteous, and compaſſionate to all. Motives *to Faithfulneſs.*

To conclude: St. *John* the *Baptiſt*, led ſo innocent, ſo uſeful and ſo exemplary a life, that he was the admiration of all that knew him. In the wilderneſs, his company was Angels, his employment meditations and prayers; and when the Spirit of God called him forth to the publick adminiſtration of his office, he made it the great buſineſs and conſtant employment of his life, to prepare the people for the chriſtian religion and for the reception of the bleſſed *Jeſus*. He had a juſt ſenſe of the ineſtimable worth and value of the ſouls of Men; and Concluſion.

therefore, he was very diligent in encouraging men to repentance, and in repreſenting to them the infinite advantages of obeying God's laws, and the dreadful and dangerous conſequences of breaking them. And he did not think it enough, barely to declare and interpret the will and pleaſure of the Almighty, but he likewiſe ſet before men a living pattern, and a familiar example, to excite and encourage them to the practice of holineſs and virtue. Such a preacher, and ſuch a practice as that of the *Baptiſt*'s was, is every way fitted to reprove and perſuade and reform Mankind. Let us then, (in imitation of him,) perſevere and continue in well-doing: Let us, on this very day, reſolve to forſake our ſins, and to become better for the future; more pious and devout towards God, more ſober and chaſte with regard to our ſelves, more juſt and charitable, more humble and meek, towards all men: In a word, more innocent, more uſeful, and more *holy, in all manner of converſation.* Let us not only admire, but follow the example of this bleſſed Saint, and it will both ſhew us where we are, and carry us where we ſhall *have a continuing City*, even to everlaſting joy and peace.

The PRAYER.

O *Holy and moſt glorious God! who before the publication of thy eternal Son, didſt ſend thy ſervant* John Baptiſt, *to prepare the way of his great Maſter, by the doctrine of repentance, and an holy and an exemplary life. Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that I may not only joyfully celebrate his nativity, but may improve both my ſelf, and others by the diligent imitation of his example. Be pleas'd, to let thy holy Spirit lead*

me

me in the ſtreight paths of ſanctity, that I may faithfully endeavour to learn of him, thoſe excellent leſſons of retiredneſs, mortification, humility, ſelf-denial, and a generous charity in all my actions; that when my bleſſed Redeemer *ſhall come, I may at all times, be prepar'd for the entertainment of ſo divine a gueſt, till he ſhall be pleaſed to call me to a nearer communication of his excellencies. Let thy mighty hand and ſtretched out arm, O heavenly Father, lead me through the midſt of a deceitful world, giving me the light of the Sun of righteouſneſs to direct me in my goings, and lively apprehenſions of thy mercies to excite in me devotion and true religion. Grant, that my ſoul and deſires may be ſo abſtracted, ſo religious and contemplative, that all my hopes and longings may be to enjoy thee and thy glories, in the kingdom of Heaven. Laſtly, O Lord, I beſeech thee to improve a true ſenſe of religion and devout affections in thy miniſters; that by the purity of their doctrine and the integrity of their lives, they may advance thy glory, and ſet forward the ſalvation of all thoſe committed to their charge. Grant this, O merciful Father! for thy dear Son* Jeſus Chriſt's *ſake.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

ALmighty God! by whoſe providence, thy ſervant *John Baptiſt* was wonderfully born, and ſent to prepare the way of thy Son our Saviour, by preaching of repentance: make me ſo to follow his doctrine and holy life, that I may truly repent according to his preaching, and after his example conſtantly ſpeak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently ſuffer for the truth's ſake, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm. 139, 140, 141. *Evening.* 142, 143.

St. PETER's DAY.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. Eccl. 15. 2. Act. 3. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. Eccl. 19. 2. Act. 4.

St. Peter *his* Parentage, Birth-place, Names, *and* Trade.

ST. *Peter* was born at *Bethſaida*, a town ſituated upon the banks of the Sea of *Galilee*: He was the Son of *Jonah*, a fiſherman, and brother to St. *Andrew* the Apoſtle. At his circumciſion, he received the name of *Simon* or *Simeon*; to which our Saviour added that of *Cephas*, which in the *Syriac* language ſignifies a *ſtone*, or *rock*; from thence deriv'd into the *Greek* Πέτρος, and by us term'd *Peter*. This Apoſtle, and his brother *Andrew*, were brought up to the trade of fiſhing, and were the two firſt which our Saviour made choice of, to be his Diſciples and Followers; though according to St. *Luke*, *Andrew*, having the *Meſſiah* firſt reveal'd to him by *John* the *Baptiſt*, went immediately to his brother *Peter*, to acquaint him with thoſe glad tidings. Whereupon, *Peter* being raviſhed with the joyful news preſently went along with him to the place where *Jeſus* was: Whither he was no ſooner come, but our Lord, to give an illuſtrious evidence of his Divinity, call'd him by his name and declar'd his parentage; and at this time it was, that he chang'd his name from *Simon* to *Cephas* or *Peter*, which (as I mention'd before) ſignifies a *Rock*; intimating, that he ſhould be afterwards a principal foundation-ſtone in his Church. Upon this, *Peter* preſently knew that he was the omniſcient Son of God, and the long-

His firſt approaches to Chriſt.

expected

expected *Meſſiah* that was come into the World.

After ſome communication with the bleſſed *Jeſus*, our Apoſtle return'd to his trade; and it happen'd that our Lord, being one day upon the banks of the Sea of *Galilee*, ſtept into *Peter*'s ſhip, to avoid the crowd, and to teach the people: At which time, he gave ocular demonſtration of his power, by a miraculous draught of fiſhes which was inclos'd at his command. So evident were the appearances of Divinity in this miracle, that *Peter* was over-power'd and dazled with its brightneſs and luſtre, and therefore in an ecſtaſy of admiration, threw himſelf at the feet of *Chriſt*, and ſaid, *Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man, O Lord!* But *Peter*'s profound humility exalted him in his great Maſter's ſervice; who told him that he would make him a *fiſher of men*; and in order hereunto commanded him to follow him, which he immediately complied with; and from that time, became his conſtant and inſeparable Diſciple.

The miraculous draught of fiſhes.

Peter *called to be a* Diſciple.

After this, the firſt place our Saviour came to, was *Capernaum*, the place of *Peter*'s habitation; and entring into *Simon*'s houſe, a freſh opportunity offer'd itſelf to *Chriſt* of exerting his divine power: For *Peter*'s wife's mother lying deſperately ſick of a fever; and her diſeaſe having baffled all the arts of phyſick, was only curable by the immediate agency of the God of Nature. So our Saviour came to her, and taking her by the hand, commanded the fever to leave her. By which, he ſo perfectly remov'd the *paroxyſms* of the diſtemper and the effects of it, that ſhe was in a moment reſtor'd to perfect health.

His Mother-in-law *cur'd by our* Saviour.

Of

Of all the twelve Apoſtles, which our Saviour pitch'd upon to be the immediate attendants upon his perſon, and the conſtant witneſſes of his doctrine and miracles; *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, were admitted into all private councils and tranſactions: But *Peter* is generally plac'd in the front; his age, and the gravity of his perſon more particularly qualifying him for a primacy of order in the college of the Apoſtles. Not long after his election he was an eye-witneſs of our Saviour's omnipotency in raiſing *Jairus*'s daughter from the dead: He is likewiſe mention'd to have walk'd upon the Sea in a great ſtorm to meet his Maſter. The ancients frequently ſtyle him, [h] *The mouth of the Apoſtles*, and not without reaſon; for when our Saviour, being forſaken of the multitude at *Capernaum*, turn'd about to his Apoſtles, and asking them, if *they would leave him alſo? Peter*, in the name of the reſt, anſwer'd him, with a ſeeming abhorrence of the other Diſciples apoſtacy, Lord, *Whither can we go? 'Tis thou only haſt the words of eternal life.* And when in the journey to *Cæſarea Philippi*, our Saviour ask'd his Diſciples, what men ſaid of him? And alſo what their opinion and belief was concerning him? *Simon Peter* made anſwer in poſitive terms, *Thou art* Chriſt, *the Son of the living God!* To this excellent and comprehenſive confeſſion of St. *Peter*'s, our Lord returns this great *eulogy* and commendation: *Bleſſed art thou*, Simon Bar Jonah; *for fleſh and blood hath not reveal'd it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven. And I ſay alſo unto thee, that thou art* Peter, *and upon this rock* (of thy confeſſion) *I will build my Church; and the gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.*

He is the firſt of the Apoſtles.

His adherence to Chriſt.

His eminent Confeſſion of Chriſt.

[h] Chryſoſt. *in* Matth. xvi. *pag.* 483.

And

And I will give unto thee, the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: and whatſoever thou ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven; and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven. (Matth. xvi. 17, 18, 19.) *Peter* was tranſported with zeal and affection for his Maſter, having been made the ſubject of ſuch vaſt encomiums; and therefore, upon hearing our bleſſed Saviour talk of the innumerable affronts and indignities that he was to undergo at *Jeruſalem*, he broke out into an over-confident and unſeaſonable interruption of him, ſaying, *Be it far from thee, Lord! This ſhall not be unto thee.* But *Jeſus*, knowing that this ſaying croſſed the decrees of Heaven, and defeated the gracious purpoſes of man's redemption, turn'd to him, and ſaid, *Get thee behind me*, Satan, *for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but thoſe that be of men.* (Matth. xvi. 23.) But however, it ſoon appear'd, that this rebuke was but the chaſtiſing leſſon of a gracious Maſter; who knew the error which he had committed was the effect of his imprudent zeal. For, when our Saviour went up to mount *Tabor*, to receive a type and *ſpecimen* of his future glorification, *Peter* was not left out of the *triumvirate* of Apoſtles; for he with *James* and *John* were the only witneſſes and ſpectators of his transfiguration. At that time, our Lord made the moſt magnificent diſplays of his divine power and majeſty. For, while he was earneſtly employ'd in prayer, he was ſuddenly transform'd into another kind of appearance: A radiant luſtre darted from his countenance, more bright and glorious than the Sun; and a dazling ſplendor proceeded from his garments, exceeding not only the whiteſt ſnow and the utmoſt power of art, but alſo the light itſelf. During this heavenly ſcene, there appear'd

His unſeaſonable Zeal.

Chriſt's *Tranſfiguration.*

And the Glory *of it.*

pear'd *Moſes* and *Elias*, cloath'd with all the brightneſs and majeſty of a glorified ſtate familiarly converſing with him, and diſcourſing of his death and ſufferings; by which, he was to be exalted above every name, both in Heaven and Earth. While this intercourſe laſted, *Peter* and the two other Apoſtles were fallen aſleep; but waking juſt before their departure, they were exceedingly ſurpriz'd and terrify'd, to behold their Lord ſurrounded with ſuch refulgent glories. And *Peter*, in an ecſtaſy of admiration, ſaid unto *Jeſus*, Lord! it will be more advantagious to us to continue here in this heavenly ſociety, than to go again into a wicked world, and encounter ſuch perſecutions as thou haſt foretold: Permit us therefore, to erect *three Tabernacles*; *one for* Thee, *one for* Moſes, *and one for* Elias. But while he was ſpeaking, a bright and ſhining cloud incircled the interlocutors with *Jeſus* and took them up into Heaven, and a voice was heard, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, hear him.* Whereupon the Apoſtles were ſeiz'd with a greater conſternation than ever, and fell proſtrate on the ground. But our Lord comforted them, and when they had recover'd their ſpirits, they, together with their Saviour, deſcended from the mountain.

The effect it had upon Peter.

And the reſt of the Apoſtles.

To be ſhort: St. *Peter*, was the intimate companion of our Saviour, whom he admitted moſt familiarly unto all the ſecret paſſages and tranſactions of his life. And ſo, to draw up a compleat hiſtory of the acts of this great Apoſtle, would ſwell this volume beyond my preſent deſign. Therefore, I ſhall only mention two very remarkable paſſages of his life, and then conclude with his martyrdom: As for thoſe, who are deſirous of a more perfect account, they cannot conſult a more authentick author than

Dr.

Dr. *Cave*, who has gone thro' this undertaking with the greateſt exactneſs. To proceed then: About the end of *Caligula*'s reign, our Apoſtle came to *Jeruſalem*; and *Herod Agrippa*, grandſon to *Herod* the great, having obtain'd of *Claudius* the government of *Judea*, came to *Jeruſalem* at the Paſſover, to be inaugurated into his Kingdom; and being deſirous to ingratiate himſelf with the *Jews*, he killed *James* the brother of *John* with the ſword: And finding that this was a moſt acceptable ſacrifice to the people, he proceeded to apprehend *Peter* alſo, purpoſing to put him to death. In order whereunto, he ſeiz'd upon him, and caſt him into priſon, under the guard of four quaternions of ſoldiers; but the Church, in the mean time, were not wanting in their earneſt addreſſes to Heaven for his deliverance. And it happen'd, that *Herod*'s power and policy, was baffled by the Chriſtians piety: For the night before his intended execution, God purpoſely ſent an Angel from Heaven into the Priſon; and as *Peter* was ſleeping between two ſoldiers, the Angel rais'd him up, knock'd off his fetters, bid him gird on his garments, and follow him; and he went out, and follow'd him. But, having paſs'd the firſt and ſecond watch, they came unto the iron gate which leadeth unto the City, (which preſently open'd of its own accord) and after having paſs'd one ſtreet more, the Angel left him to his own conduct. *Peter* then bethought himſelf where he was, and finding his deliverance real, he went to *Mary*'s houſe, where the Church were met together at prayer for him. And as he knock'd at the door, the maid knowing his voice, open'd not the gate for gladneſs, but ran in, and told that *Peter* ſtood at the door. But they had ſcarce faith enough to believe

He is impriſon'd by Herod Agrippa.

And miraculouſly deliver'd by an Angel.

lieve her; till opening the door, they found to their great joy and aſtoniſhment that it was really ſo. And he having briefly declar'd to them the manner of his deliverance, he retreated to another place of greater ſecrecy and ſafety. In the morning, *Herod* was ſo highly exaſperated with the keepers of the priſon, that he commanded them to be put to death.

Where *Peter* fled, after this great miracle wrought for his preſervation, is not certainly known: 'Tis ſaid that he preach'd the Goſpel to the *Jews*, diſpers'd in *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, and *Aſia*; but in the latter part of his life, and in *Nero*'s reign, he came and ſettled at *Rome*. At his arrival he found the peoples minds ſtrangely bewitch'd and harden'd againſt Chriſtianity, by the infernal arts of *Simon Magus*, who, by his diabolical cheats and devices, had obtain'd ſuch great veneration among the *Romans*, nay from *Nero*, that, according to *Juſtin Martyr* (as ſome read the paſſage) they erected him a ſtatue, with this Inſcription, SIMONI DEO SANCTO, *To* Simon *the holy God*. *Peter* being highly provok'd at this preſumptuous arrogancy, made it his buſineſs to unmaſk the vile impoſtor, and lay open his prevaricating tricks and deluſions. For effecting of which, there happen'd a very fit occaſion not to be here omitted. There was at this time at *Rome*, an eminent young gentleman, and a kinſman of the Emperors, lately dead. And for the raiſing of him to life, the conteſt was between St. *Peter*, and *Simon Magus*. The Magician being the challenger, our Apoſtle (ſtrong in faith) readily accepted the challenge, and affected that by the power of God, which the other could not by the power of the Devil. The *Sorcerer* was extreamly mortify'd at this defeat, and was in danger

His encounter with Simon Magus.

And victory over him.

ger of being ſton'd to death, had not *Peter*'s charity and generoſity reſcu'd him: But at laſt, thinking to deceive the people, he ſet a day, and told them, that they ſhould all ſee him aſcend up into Heaven, as the Son of God. The time being come, he went up to the mount of the *Capitol*, and throwing himſelf from the top of the rock, began to raiſe himſelf up into the air: A ſight which the people entertain'd with great wonder and amazement, affirming that this muſt be the power of God, and not of Man. But *Peter* being in the croud, betook himſelf to his prayers, that the Almighty would diſcover that grand *Impoſtor* and undeceive the people. Whereupon, *Simon*'s artificial wings failing him, he fell head-long to the ground, and was ſo bruiſed and wounded by the fall, that he died within a ſhort time after.

But, it happen'd that the death of this miſerable wretch, haſten'd the martyrdom of our Apoſtle. For the Emperor *Nero* was a very great admirer of *Magicians*, and their diabolical arts; and regarded the fallacies of an *Impoſtor* more than the reality of a divine miracle. And therefore, he caus'd *Peter* (together with St. *Paul*, who was then at *Rome*) to be apprehended and caſt into the *Mamertine* priſon; where they ſpent their time in the exerciſes of Religion, and in preaching the Goſpel to their fellow-priſoners. But at length, the time being come wherein our Apoſtle was to receive the glorious rewards of all his love and duty to his maſter; he was brought out of the priſon, and led to the top of the *Vatican* mount; where he was crucified after an unuſual manner. For, this bleſſed Saint, would not ſeem to affect an equal glory with his Lord and Maſter in his ſufferings; and therefore begg'd of his Execu-

His Impriſonment.

And Martyrdom. Executioners, that he might be crucified with his head downwards, which was perform'd accordingly. His body was taken down from the Croſs, and bury'd in the *Vatican*, near the *Via Triumphalis*.

Thus liv'd, and thus dy'd the great Apoſtle of the bleſſed *Jeſus*. He left behind him two Epiſtles, which make up part of the ſacred canon: And St. *Mark* is ſaid to have writ the Goſpel which bears his name from St. *Peter*'s mouth. His death is generally computed to have been in the year of our Lord, 69. and in the 13th or 14th of *Nero*'s reign.

Epiſtle. Act. 12. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. PETER'S DAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 10. *from* v. 13. *to* v. 20.

The wiſe and admirable methods of the Divine Providence, *in planting and propagating the* Chriſtian Religion. IT muſt certainly be acknowledg'd an illuſtrious evidence of the incomprehenſible wiſdom and power of our bleſſed Redeemer, that the *chriſtian religion* ſhould ſpread and flouriſh over the heathen world, by ſuch mean and unlikely inſtruments as the firſt preachers of it were. St. *Peter*, a poor illiterate *Fiſherman*, deſtitute of the advantages of a liberal and ingenuous education, was one of the firſt, that our Saviour made choice of to plant and propagate the *Goſpel*. In the like manner, all the reſt of the Apoſtles (St. *Paul* only excepted) were taken from the meaneſt trades; they were men that had never been educated in the *academy*, and the *ſchools* of learning, they had no *eloquent* tongues, no *ſubtil* and *diſcurſive* heads, none of the *refin'd* and *rhetorical* arts of *Greece*,

Greece, to inſinuate the belief of the doctrines they deliver'd. Yet, theſe were the perſons, that were deſign'd to conquer the minds of men, and to prevail powerfully over the *learned* world; and in a ſeaſon, when the *Roman Empire* was at its height; when the moſt rigorous ſeverities were us'd againſt all *innovators*; when *philoſophy* and *eloquence* were in their flower and vigour: So that truth, unleſs adorn'd with the dreſs and artifice of falſhood, was deſpis'd; and a meſſage from Heaven, unleſs *eloquently* convey'd, was but an object of ſcorn. Notwithſtanding all theſe diſadvantages, a few *mariners* and *fiſhermen*, with an uncontroll'd ſucceſs, run down the *wiſe* and *learned* men of the moſt *profound* abilities; and brought them over to that doctrine, that was deſpis'd and ſcorn'd, oppos'd and perſecuted, and that had nothing but its own native excellency to recommend it: And 'tis ſaid at one time (*Acts* vi. 7.) *A great company of the prieſts were obedient to the faith.* Certainly, had humane wiſdom been to manage the buſineſs (ſays an eminent writer) it would have taken quite other meaſures; and choſen out the moſt celebrated *Rabbins*, the acuteſt *Philoſophers*, the ſmootheſt *Orators*, ſuch as would have been moſt likely by ſtrength of *reaſon*, and arts of *rhetorick*, to have triumph'd over the minds of men, to grapple with the ſtubbornneſs of the *Jews*, and baffle the finer *notions* and *ſpeculations* of the *Greeks*. But *the wiſdom of the world is fooliſhneſs with God*; (1 Cor. iii. 19.) and the plaineſt *homily*, accompany'd with the divine aſſiſtance, is abundantly more efficacious than the greateſt *volubility* of expreſſion, or *ornaments* of ſpeech, or the *artifices* which were us'd in the compoſitions of the *Greeks*. Let *politicians* contrive as *accurately*,

project as *deeply*, and purſue what they have thus *contriv'd* and *projected*, as diligently as it is poſſible for human wit and induſtry to do; yet ſtill, the ſucceſs of all depends upon the favour and bleſſing of an over-ruling hand. *The Lord* (ſays the *Pſalmiſt*) *knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe, that they are but vain.* All their contrivances, though never ſo *elaborately* form'd and wrought, do yet, in the iſſue, miſcarry and prove abortive: For, *God taketh the wiſe in their own craftineſs.* But, on the other hand, a company of obſcure and mean, ſimple and illiterate, poor and helpleſs men, through the aſſiſtance of Heaven, were able to conquer the greateſt *Orators* and *Grammarians*, the wiſeſt *Philoſophers* and moſt ſubtil *Diſputants*, and bring them over to the ſimplicity of the Goſpel. Our bleſſed Saviour, no ſooner gave commiſſion to his *evangelical meſſengers* to *go forth, and teach all nations*, but a noble *army of martyrs* ſprang from the majeſtick brevity of that one expreſſion: An expreſſion, ſo ſuited to the greatneſs of an *omnipotent being*, and ſo expreſſive of his boundleſs *power*, as a *power* infinitely above all controul or poſſibility of finding the leaſt obſtacle or delay, in atchieving its *mightieſt* and moſt *ſtupendous* works! *Whoſo is* truly *wiſe*, will *conſider theſe things, and they ſhall* hereby underſtand *the loving kindneſs*, as well as the wiſdom and power *of the Lord.*

Let us then, with all imaginable reverence, admire the wiſe and admirable methods of the divine Providence, in planting and propagating the chriſtian faith. Let us welcome that excellent *doctrine* which our great Apoſtle St. *Peter* ſeal'd with his blood: A *doctrine*, ſuitable to the higheſt and beſt improv'd reaſon of mankind, and plainly tending to our perfection

Chriſtian Religion, *the only true perfection.*

and

and happineſs; both for the ſublimity of its myſteries, and the ſimplicity and excellency of its precepts: A *doctrine*, in all reſpects, ſo perfect and tranſcendent, that it is beyond the compaſs of human underſtanding, to imagine any thing more glorious and majeſtick. Let us but look into the life of our Apoſtle, and there we ſhall have a clear demonſtration of the admirable effects of this *doctrine*, the mighty force of this inſtitution. "He was a perſon of ex- *St. Peter his excellent diſpoſitions.*
"emplary *humility* and *lowlineſs of mind*; which
"appears by his begging of our Saviour to de-
"part from him, accounting himſelf not wor-
"thy that the Son of God ſhould come near
"ſo vile a ſinner. And when our bleſſed
"Lord was pleaſed to condeſcend to waſh his
"Diſciples feet, St. *Peter* modeſtly declin'd it;
"thinking it too ſublime an honour, to be
"conferr'd upon ſo mean a perſon as him-
"ſelf. He had a ſuperior *love* and *affection*
"for his great Maſter, which he thought he
"could never expreſs at too high a rate: For
"his ſake, venturing on the greateſt dangers,
"and expoſing himſelf to the moſt imminent
"hazards of life. *Great*, was his forwardneſs
"in owning *Chriſt* to be the *Meſſiah* and Son
"of God; which drew from our Lord that
"honourable *encomium*, *Bleſſed art thou*, Simon
"Bar Jonah: But *greater* his courage and con-
"ſtancy, in confeſſing him before his moſt in-
"veterate enemies; eſpecially after he had re-
"covered himſelf from his fall. He told the
"*Jews*, to their very faces, that they were
"the murderers and crucifiers of the Lord of
"glory; nay, with abundance of courage and
"reſolution, he reprov'd the very *Sanhedrim*,
"that had ſentenc'd and condemn'd him, for
"their unparallel'd wickedneſs and barbarity.

" In a word, conſider him, as a *Diſciple*, and " a *Chriſtian*; and we ſhall find him bright " and exemplary in all the great inſtances of " religion: And if we reflect upon him as an " *Apoſtle*; we ſhall find him indefatigably la- " borious in planting and propagating the chri- " ſtian faith, and at laſt, laying down his own " life, to promote and further it.

Motives *to* practice. And now certainly, the conſideration of this excellent example, muſt needs be an extraordinary motive to obedience, and cauſe us to put in practice all thoſe divine and heavenly virtues for which he was eminent. Let us then, entertain this light, which God hath afforded to us, to conduct us and ſhew us the way to everlaſting happineſs. Let us from thence, learn the noble principle of *humility*, which is the peculiar grace, and richeſt ornament of a Chriſtian. Let our *love* to our great Maſter, be ſincere and unfeign'd; for certainly, the moſt elevated and intire affection is due to him, who ſaves us from death eternal, and beſtows upon us an inheritance immortal and undefiled. Let us beware of depending too much upon our own ſtrength, leſt we are ſurpriz'd unawares by a violent temptation. St. *Peter*, was a ſad inſtance of human infirmity, by denying his dear Lord and Maſter, but at the ſame time he became to us a rare example of Penitence, by returning and riſing inſtantly. No ſooner had he committed the ſhameful fact, but he *wept bitterly*; paſſionately bewailing his folly and the aggravations of his ſin. And ſurely, whenever we remember the faults and follies of our lives, we cannot but be inwardly touch'd, and ſenſibly griev'd at the thoughts of them. I know, that the tempers of men are very different; and therefore, I do not ſay, that tears

are

are abſolutely neceſſary to repentance, but they do very well become it; and the leaſt we can do when we have done amiſs, is to be ſorry for it, and condemn our own folly, and to be full of indignation and diſpleaſure againſt our ſelves for what we have done, and to reſolve never to do the like again.

To conclude, let us therefore on this day, call our ways to remembrance, and endeavour to make ſome reparation for our faults by a ſpeedy and hearty repentance; and no doubt, but we ſhall recover ourſelves into the favour of Heaven. The ſucceſs is certain and infallible, and none ever yet miſcarry'd in the attempt. Almighty God, whoſe mercies are infinite, *deſires not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould turn from his wickedneſs and live.* If the Prodigal will but return home to his Father's houſe, with a ſincere reſolution of amendment, his heavenly Father will own him in the loweſt condition; he will ſpeak peace to his troubled conſcience, and in a word, will *never leave him, nor forſake him:* But (as the *Pſalmiſt* expreſſes it,) he will firſt *guide him with his counſel, and afterwards receive him into glory.* Concluſion.

The PRAYER.

O *Holy and eternal* Jeſus! *who haſt glorioufly manifeſted thine incomprehenſible wiſdom and power, in thoſe excellent methods which thou waſt pleaſed to make uſe of, for the propagation of the chriſtian faith: Grant, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, that as thou didſt give commiſſion to thy Apoſtle St.* Peter, *to preach the Goſpel to all nations, and didſt enable him to ſeal the truth of it with his blood, ſo by thy ſpecial grace and aſſiſtance, all the miniſters of thy word may duly imitate both the*

ſoundneſs of his doctrine, and his great zeal for thy glory, and the ſalvation of mankind. Make them, O bleſſed Lord! faithful to that truſt which thou haſt committed unto them; and grant, that by their diligent labours, prudent carriage, holy and exemplary lives, they may gain many unto righteouſneſs. O thou, who art the Saviour of all that put their truſt in thee! Look down likewiſe, I beſeech thee, upon me thy unworthy ſervant, and make me truly ſenſible of my own frailties, and infirmities, that ſo, whenever I go aſtray, I may be immediately convinc'd of it; and by a ſpeedy repentance recover my ſelf, before I have wander'd too far from my duty. O give me the comfort of thy help, and ſtabliſh me with thy free Spirit, *that by thy powerful grace and aſſiſtance, I may be enabled to become every day better, and to reform whatever has been amiſs in the temper and diſpoſition of my mind, or in any of the actions of my life. Grant this, O bleſſed Saviour, for thine own bowels and compaſſions ſake; to whom with the Father, and eternal Spirit, be render'd all honour, glory and power, from this time forth, for evermore.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who by thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, didſt give to thy Apoſtle St. *Peter*, many excellent Gifts, and commandedſt him earneſtly to feed thy flock: Make, I beſeech thee, all Biſhops and Paſtors, diligently to preach thy holy word, and the people obediently to follow the ſame, that they may receive the crown of everlaſting glory, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

St.

Morning. Psalm 119. *par.* — *Evening.* 119. *par.*

St. James's Day.

Morning. 1. Lesſ. Eccl. 21. 2. Joh. 13. *Evening.* 1. Lesſ. Eccl. 22. 2. 2 Tim. 4.

ST. James, commonly ſir-named the Great, (either for his age, or ſome peculiar honours conferred on him by our *Lord*) was a *Galilean*, born probably at *Capernaum*, or elſe at *Bethſaida*, being one of *Simon Peter*'s partners in the trade of fiſhing. He was the ſon of *Zebedee*, an eminent fiſherman, who kept ſeveral Servants under him for that employment: His Mother's name was *Mary*, ſir-nam'd *Salome*; and he was the brother of *John* the Evangeliſt. He diligently applied himſelf to his father's trade, and as he and his brother were, one day, fiſhing in the Sea of *Galilee*, our Saviour paſſing along the ſhoar, called them to follow him, and to be his Diſciples, promiſing to make them *fiſhers of men*. This command they readily obey'd, and left not only their employment, but their aged father *Zebedee* with his ſervants and ſhip, and with a chearful obedience became conſtant attendants upon him in his miniſtry.

St. James *his* country, kindred *and* trade.

His call to be a Diſciple.

Not long after, St. James was called from the ſtation of an ordinary Diſciple, to the Apoſtolical Office; and not only ſo, but was admitted to the moſt private paſſages and tranſactions of our Saviour's life. For he, together with *Peter* and *John*, were at the miraculous raiſing of *Jairus*'s Daughter from the dead: They were admitted to our *Lord*'s glorious transfiguration upon the mount; and were pre-

His election to the Apoſtolick Office.

ſent at his bitter agony in the garden of *Gethſemane*. And as *Simon*, was by our *Lord* ſir-named *Peter*; ſo *James* the ſon of *Zebedee*, and *John* his brother, were ſir-named *Boanerges*, or *ſons of thunder*; to denote probably, their teaching the great myſteries and inſtitutions of the Goſpel, in a profounder ſtrain than the reſt.

He and his brother ſtil'd Boanerges, *and why.*

How our Apoſtle ſteer'd his courſe after our Saviour's aſcenſion, we have no certain account, either from ſacred, or eccleſiaſtical ſtories. *Sophronius* ſays he preached to the converted *Jews*. The *Breviary* of *Toledo*, *Iſidorus*, and an *Arabick* copy of *Anaſtaſius*, and the *Spaniſh* writers in general, will have it that after the martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, having preached and planted the Goſpel up and down *Judea* and *Samaria*, he travelled into the *Weſtern* parts of the World, and the *Britiſh Iſles*, but more eſpecially *Spain*. Yet whether he was a traveller into theſe *Weſtern* parts, or whether his miniſtry was confin'd to *Judea*, and the parts adjacent; certain it is that at *Jeruſalem* we have the laſt account of him, it being the place of his *martyrdom*. The occaſion whereof was this: *Herod Agrippa*, ſon of *Ariſtobulus*, and grandſon to *Herod* the great, having been lately made king of *Judea*, comes over from *Rome*, to take poſſeſſion, and to manage the affairs of his new acquired kingdom. And being deſirous upon the entrance of his ſovereignty, to inſinuate himſelf into the favour of the *Jews:* he raiſed a ſharp perſecution againſt the Chriſtians, whom he knew the *Jews* hated in the higheſt degree. And that he might ruin the Church he ſeiz'd upon our Apoſtle, and without delay condemned him to be put to death, *Acts* xii. 2. As he was led out to the place of execution, *Clemens Alexandrinus* tells us, that the ſoldier that guard-

The places *where he preached* (probably.)

The cauſe of his Martyrdom.

ed

ed him, (or rather his accuſer) obſerving his undaunted courage, and immoveable conſtancy, falling down at our Apoſtle's feet embraced Chriſtianity, and ſo both were beheaded at the ſame time. And thus fell St. *James the Great*; the apoſtolick *Proto-Martyr*, that laid down his life, for the teſtimony of the Goſpel. His body was taken up and interr'd at *Jeruſalem*, and afterwards, (as ſome ſay) tranſlated to *Iria Flavia*, and from thence to *Compoſtella*.

His death.

And burial.

Epiſtle. Acts 11. 27. *and part of* chap. 12.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. JAMES's DAY.

Goſpel. Mat. 20. *from* v. 20. *to* v. 29.

GOD, who made man a reaſonable creature, and hath endowed him with faculties, whereby he is capable of knowing and practiſing his duty, hath appointed him a work and ſervice ſuitable to theſe faculties. He hath not ſent any perſon into the World to no purpoſe, and only *to take his paſtime therein*; but hath aſſigned every man ſome honeſt calling and employment, whereby, they may be ſerviceable to themſelves and the reſt of their fellow-creatures. Nay, ſuch is the goodneſs of our great Creator, that he does not only allow us to provide for the neceſſities and conveniences of this life; but hath made it our duty ſo to do. It is one of the inſpir'd precepts, *That they which have believed in God, ſhould be careful to maintain good works*, (i. e.) to employ themſelves in the works of an honeſt calling, for the ſupport of their families, and the relief of thoſe who ſtand in need of their aſſiſtance. And again, *Epheſ.* iv. 28.)

Diligence *in our* calling *a part of* religion.

28.) *Let him that ſtole, ſteal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands, the thing which is good.* The ſenſe of which is to oblige us to engage our ſelves in ſome honeſt calling and employment. Accordingly, our Apoſtle St. *James* was brought up to the trade of *fiſhing*, and was very induſtrious and diligent in his profeſſion. It was, indeed, an employment very mean and ſervile, very painful and laborious, and at the ſame time made but a very ſmall return. But meanneſs is no bar in God's way; the poor, (if virtuous) are as dear to Heaven as the wealthy and the honourable; equally alike to him, with whom *there is no reſpect of perſons.* No employment is baſe, that's honeſt and induſtrious; nor can it be thought mean and diſreputable, to work either at the ſpade, or anvil, when we conſider that the Son of God himſelf worked at the trade of a carpenter. Let no man then, be diſcouraged at the lowneſs, or ſink under the difficulties of a mean employment; for uſually, the bleſſings of heaven overtake men in the way of an honeſt and induſtrious diligence. Our bleſſed *Lord*, no ſooner ſaw St. *James*, endeavouring to get an honeſt livelihood, but he ſeem'd immediately to caſt a peculiar honour upon his profeſſion, calling him from *catching of fiſh*, to be a *fiſher of men*, and to be a glorious inſtrument of good to the Church.

None exempted from ſome calling.

But, there are ſome perſons, perhaps, whoſe birth and condition, ſet them above the common employments of life, and the works of an ordinary calling; and ſo they think themſelves exempted or excuſed from all buſineſs, and allowed to live as an unprofitable part of mankind, becauſe they are plentifully provided for. But, is it imaginable, that the wiſe governour of the World,

World, ſhould put ſo many excellent inſtruments of action into their hands, only to make them leſs active? That were to accuſe the divine wiſdom of ſuch an unſkilful kind of management, as the ſhalloweſt humane providence falls not under. For, no perſon of common ſenſe, would be at the care and expence to furniſh a ſervant with all materials and utenſils for work, with no other deſign, but that he may ſpend his time in ſleep or riot. And therefore, perſons of great birth and quality, have ſo much the greater obligation to be publickly uſeful and beneficial. (i) Thoſe, who move in a low and private ſphere in the World, can only ſhine to a few; but they that are advanc'd to a great height above others, may like the heavenly bodies, diſpenſe a general light and influence, and ſcatter happineſs and bleſſings among thoſe that are below them.

Duty of thoſe of a high calling.

Let no perſon therefore, of what birth, or rank, or quality ſoever, imagine that his great advantages of life are a patent for ſloth. For, how exempt ſoever his condition be from the ordinary care and drudgery of humane life, he may find work enough, wherein he may uſefully employ all his time, and provide for his own, and for the common benefit of mankind. Perſons of great wealth, may be ſerviceable to their country and the affairs of government, and in the care of publick juſtice, and may employ their talents in preparing and rendring themſelves more fit for this ſervice. But as for thoſe who are in a lower condition, they are ob-

(i) Neque enim ita generati ſumus à naturâ, ut ad ludum & jocum facti eſſe videamur; ſed ad ſeveritatem potiùs, & quædam ſtudia graviora atque majora. *Tull. de Off. lib.* 1.

liged,

liged, by their neceſſities, to follow ſome honeſt calling, for a comfortable ſubſiſtence in the World; and God almighty requires, that they ſhould be diligent and induſtrious in that particular calling, wherein his providence hath placed them. Beſides, by induſtry (ſays a learned writer) we imitate the bleſſed angels: For, among all the orders of the divine *Hierarchy*, we cannot find one patron or preſident of idleneſs. For, as the ſpirituality of their eſſence renders them more agile and active, ſo that activity is perpetually exerciſed in employing the abilities they have received to the glory of God the donor: and that, not only in bearing a part in that celeſtial choir, which inceſſantly ſings his praiſes; but in the more laborious and ſervile offices, of being miniſtring ſpirits; yea, even to thoſe, to whom both in reſpect of nature and innocenee, they are infinitely ſuperior. Moreover as to the advantages of this life, abſtractedly conſidered; *Solomon* informs us, that *the diligent hand maketh rich*, (Prov. x. 4.) *Rich* in eſtate, *rich* in knowledge. *Seeſt thou a man diligent in his buſineſs* (as the ſame *wiſe man* obſerves) *he ſhall ſtand before Princes, he ſhall not ſtand before mean men*, (Prov. xxii. 29.) And when the *Roman hiſtorians*, deſcribe an extraordinary man, this always enters into his character as an eſſential part of it, that he was *incredibili induſtriâ, diligentiâ ſingulari*, Of *incredible induſtry*, of *ſingular diligence:* And indeed, no perſon whatſoever can attain to any thing extraordinary, without this excellent and commendable quality.

Motives *to* induſtry.

But after all, there is one thing conſiderable, which is of no ſmall importance; that is, that we muſt be particularly careful that our calling and employment, do not interfere with thoſe

Religion *the great* employment *of our* lives.

thoſe duties (whether publick or private) which as creatures and chriſtians, we are oblig'd to render to our great Creator. When our bleſſed Saviour call'd St. *James* from his trade, he immediately left all and follow'd him: He did not ſtay to diſpute his commands, to argue the probability of his promiſe, or ſolicitouſly to enquire into the minute conſequences of the undertaking, what difficulties and hazards might attend this new employment; but readily deliver'd up himſelf, to whatever ſervices he ſhould appoint them. In the like manner, no perſon that profeſſes Chriſtianity, ought to neglect his duty to God, for his ſecular buſineſs. Alas! where can we be happier than in his ſervice, who impoſeth nothing on us, but what contributes to our welfare? Where can we be plac'd more to our own advantage, than under his guidance and authority, who never permits any perſon to ſerve him for nought, but hath engaged himſelf to recompence our labour, with a crown of never-fading glory? If we do but conſider the vaſt, the infinite diſproportion between the beſt things in this world, and the loweſt enjoyments in the kingdom of Heaven, I believe, no perſon can be ſo amazingly ſtupid, as to neglect the great buſineſs of his religion, for a few tranſitory enjoyments. *Whoſoever*, (ſays our bleſſed Lord) *drinks of this water, ſhall thirſt again*, (John iv. 13.) and we all find by repeated experience, that it is ſo: For it is but a very little while, that the pleaſure of any outward enjoyment continues; for till it hath pleas'd us, it is not a pleaſure; and when it hath, it ceaſes to be ſo: And ſo it dies as ſoon as it is born, and its nativity is only a *preclude* to its funeral. For, indeed, our preſent life is only a time of exerciſe, a ſhort ſtate of probation and trial,

trial, in order to a durable and endleſs ſtate, in which we ſhall be immutably fixed in another world. And therefore, altho' Almighty God allows us to follow our reſpective trades and callings, and to be induſtrious towards the maintenance of our ſelves and families, yet, if they take up thoſe portions of time which are to be dedicated to our great Maſter's ſervice, they are unwarrantable encroachments upon the divine prerogatives; and conſequently, very much unbecoming him that profeſſes to love God, with all his heart, mind, ſoul and ſtrength. And ſo, the beſt, the only ſure way of qualifying our ſelves, for the enjoyments of both worlds, is *to have our fruit unto holineſs*, (amidſt all the occurrences of the world) and then without doubt, *our end will be everlaſting life.*

Concluſion.

The PRAYER.

O Almighty governor of Heaven and Earth! without whoſe bleſſing and providence, all our labours are vain and unprofitable, and our poſſeſſions are but flat and unſatisfying: Let thy bleſſing, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, deſcend upon me thy ſervant, and proſper me in that particular ſtate and employment, wherein thou in thine infinite goodneſs haſt thought fit to place me. I ſtedfaſtly reſolve to reſign my ſelf, and all that belongs to me, abſolutely to the conduct of thy holy Spirit, totally renouncing my own will and affections, inclinations and intereſts, whenever they come in competition with my duty to thee. Teach me, O compaſſionate Father! to be content in all ſtates and conditions of life. Take from me all vain and ſuperfluous cares and ſolicitudes; and ſince thou haſt been graciouſly pleas'd to promiſe

miſe that thou wilt make an abundant proviſion for me; grant, that I may rely in all things on thy all-wiſe and unerring providence. Take from me, O Lord! all deſire of ſuperfluities. which ſerve only to ſatisfy the ſenſes, and miniſter to vice; and let me reſt fully content with ſuch conveniences, as will ſuſtain me in this my earthly pilgrimage: and grant, then when thou ſhalt be pleas'd to call me, I may willingly quit all my worldly affections to follow thee, in whom alone is pleaſure and true ſatisfaction: That ſo at the laſt, I may be rewarded with an eternal weight of glory, in thy manſions of bliſs, thro' the merits and interceſſion of my bleſſed Saviour. Amen.

The COLLECT.

GRANT, O merciful God! that as thine holy Apoſtle St. *James*, leaving his Father, and all that he had, without delay, was obedient unto the calling of thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, and follow'd him; ſo I forſaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be evermore ready to follow thy holy commandments, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

St.

Morning. Pſalm 116, 117, 118. *Evening.* 119. *Par.*

St. Bartholomew's Day.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. *Eccl.* 24. 2. *Act.* 22. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. *Eccl.* 29. 2. 1 *Joh.* 1.

St. Bartholomew *the ſame with* Nathanael.

THAT St. *Bartholomew* was one of the twelve, we have ſufficient intimations in the hiſtory of the Goſpel, tho' mention'd by a different name; for *Nathanael*, whom *John* the Evangeliſt joins with *Philip*, at their firſt coming to *Chriſt*, is doubtleſs the ſame perſon, which the other three Evangeliſts mention by the name of *Bartholomew*; which may be ſuppoſed to be rather a denomination from his family, or former condition of life, than his own proper name: *Peter* is called *Bar-Jonah*, that is, the ſon of *Jonah*: So *Nathanael* might be called *Bartholomew*, as it were *Bar-tolmai*, that is, the ſon of *Tolmai*, which ſome will have to be the ſon of *Ptolomy*, and thence take occaſion to derive his pedigree from the *Ptolemies* of *Ægypt*, probably upon no other ground, then the mere analogy and ſound of the name; and this ſeems to be inconſiſtent with what the Evangeliſts unanimouſly ſpeak of *Nathanael*, namely, that he was of *Cana* in *Galilee*; or his name may be derived from a pure *Hebrew* original, and ſignify the *ſon of a drawer of water*.

His Name, *whence.*

The evangelical hiſtory takes very little notice of this Apoſtle, more than the bare mention of his name; whatever his trade or courſe of life was (tho' in all probability a fiſherman) he being conducted by *Philip*, receiv'd from our Saviour at his firſt approach this honourable

His firſt coming to Chriſt.

character,

character, *That he was a true* Iſraelite *indeed, in whom there was no guile.* A man of downright honeſty and ſincerity, without any of the arts or methods of deceit, and one that waited for redemption in *Iſrael.* Our Apoſtle was ſtrangely ſurpriz'd that our Lord ſhould immediately know him, whoſe face he had never before ſeen: But *Jeſus* told him, that he ſaw him under the figtree before *Philip* call'd him. Whereupon, he confeſs'd, that *Jeſus* was the promiſed *Meſſiah*, ſo often foretold by *Moſes* and the *Prophets*; and the omniſcient Son of God, whom he had appointed to be the King and Governor of his Church. *And converſe with him.*

As to the travels of this Apoſtle, for the propagation of the Goſpel, he is thought to have preach'd in the hither *India*, or *Arabia Felix*, and to have laid the firſt foundation of the Church there: And for a confirmation thereof, *Euſebius* tells us, that *Pantænus* (a celebrated *Stoical* philoſopher) after his converſion to Chriſtianity, being very deſirous to propagate the Goſpel in the *eaſtern* countries, took a journey into ſome parts of *India*; where he found the Goſpel of St. *Matthew* written in *Hebrew*, which our Apoſtle had left behind him. After this, he was at *Hierapolis* with *Philip*, where he narrowly eſcaped martyrdom. From thence he remov'd into *Lycaonia*, and laſt of all to *Albanople*, in the greater *Armenia*, or rather *Albania*, a city upon the *Caſpian* Sea; and miſerably overgrown with Idolatry: From which, while he thought to reclaim the inhabitants, he was laid hold on by the governor of the place (not enduring that any ſhould go about to alter their eſtabliſhed religion) and was (as ſome affirm) firſt flea'd alive, and then crucify'd with his head downwards: *The* places *where he* preach'd. *The place of his* martyrdom. *His* Death.

downwards; which punishment he chearfully underwent, comforting and confirming the *Gentile* converts to the last minute of his life. His feast, according to the ancient martyrologies is to be kept on the 24th of *August*, but the *Greeks* observe it on the 11th of *June*.

For the Epistle. Act. 5. *from* v. 12. *to* v. 17.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. BARTHOLOMEW'S DAY.

Gospel. Luke 22. *from* v. 24. *to* v. 31.

AMong too many other instances of the sad corruption and degeneracy of the age wherein we live, the great and general want of sincerity and plain dealing is none of the least. The world is grown so full of dissimulation and hypocrisy, that mens words are hardly any signification of their thoughts; and they have so far perverted the use of speech, that the largest part of the conversation of mankind and of their intercourse with one another, is little else but falshood and deceit. But, certainly, the wiser any man is, the more clearly will he discern the enormity of this vice, and how serviceable sincerity is to all the noble ends and purposes of humane life. Every man that values truth and integrity according to their intrinsick worth, must needs allow them to be arguments of a great and generous soul, and the highest character and commendation of a good man. When our blessed Saviour saw *Nathanael* coming towards him, he broke out into some kind of wonder upon the occasion, as if to see a man of perfect integrity and simplicity was an occurrence very rare and unusual; and therefore,

St. Bartholomew *an eminent pattern of* sincerity.

therefore, he entertains him with this honourable *encomium*, *Behold, an* Iſraelite *indeed! in whom there is no guile.* 'Tis true, the whole nation of the *Jews* were *Iſraelites* by natural deſcent; but our Saviour ſpeaks here in the moſt excellent and refined ſenſe, as implying a perſon who reſembled good old *Jacob*, the father of his nation, in the ſincerity of his piety, and the ſimplicity of his temper and diſpoſition. So that to be an *Iſraelite indeed*, is to be a man of real, ſubſtantial and unaffected piety; one of univerſal honeſty and integrity: Or to take it in the moſt comprehenſive meaning, one that *keeps a conſcience void of offence, both towards God and towards Man.*

Since therefore, the very life, the ſoul of religion, is ſincerity; I ſhall briefly conſider it, as it reſpects both *God* and *Man.* As it reſpects God it imports a ſincere and hearty belief of all the divine attributes; and that our apprehenſions, affections and demeanour towards our great Creator be ſuitable to his glorious perfections. It requires that we pay the ſpecial honour that is due to God, in the eſteem and veneration of our minds, in the ſubjection of our Wills, and in the aſcent of our affections to him as their proper object. That we have an entire faith in his word, a firm hope in his promiſes, a holy jealouſy for his honour, a religious care in his ſervice: And that the outward expreſſions of our piety and obedience to him in every particular be the genuine iſſue of our inward apprehenſions of him and affections towards him. And this, no doubt, was what our Saviour intended in the character of *Nathanael:* For when St. *Philip* invited him to *come and ſee* Jeſus *of* Nazareth, he did not object againſt the

Sincerity *towards* God.

meanneſs of his original, the low condition of his parents, or the poverty of his circumſtances in the world: but having an honeſt and ſincere mind, he only excepted againſt the place *Nazareth*, knowing *Bethlehem* of *Judea* to be the place fore-told by the Prophets, where the promiſed *Meſſiah* ſhould be born. However, he was not ſo far carry'd away by a popular prejudice as to make no farther enquiry concerning our Saviour, but was eaſily perſuaded to *go and ſee him*; whereupon he was fully ſatisfy'd that he was the omniſcient Son of God and the King of *Iſrael*. In the like manner every perſon who pretends to ſincerity towards God, ought to receive the truths of Chriſtianity, with an impartial and unprejudic'd mind. They ſhould lay aſide all needleſs controverſies in religion, and turn their diſputes into practice; for there are many with an honeſt ſimplicity arrive at the calm and peaceable regions of the bleſſed, whilſt others are contending about the way thither. The law of Chriſtianity is eminently and tranſcendently call'd *the truth*, and *the word of truth*; and in nothing more ſurpaſſes all the doctrines and religions in the world than in this: And therefore, 'tis amazing that men ſhould diſpute ſo earneſtly about that which is indiſputable! Chriſtianity is known in Scripture, by no name ſo ſignificantly as by the *ſimplicity of the Goſpel*; and does it not conſequently look like the greateſt paradox and prodigy in nature, for any one to pretend it lawful to quarrel about doubtful and uncertain opinions? Would but men be ſincere towards God, they would be ſo much delighted and taken up with the better work of *ſerving him in ſpirit and in truth*, that they could not find leiſure to employ

Controverſies *in* Religion, *to be laid aſide.*

employ their time about things which are at ſo great a diſtance from the life and heart of religion, as moſt of thoſe queſtions are which Chriſtians at this day contend and wrangle about. Men may be very nice and ſcrupulous about matters of faith, and yet be groſs and odious [k] hypocrites. The *Phariſee* may ſtand fair for the reputation of zeal and a more than ordinary exactneſs in religion, and yet be far from an *Iſraelite indeed*; for the character that our Saviour gives of ſuch a one, (that in the perſon of *Nathanael*) is, *that he is without guile.* Let us not then ſo uſe the means of religion as to neglect and loſe the main end of it: but let every perſon who would approve the integrity of his heart to God, impartially regard all the divine laws and every part of his duty; for without this, all outward acts of piety and devotion are hypocriſy: A picture of religion, and a *form of Godlineſs* without the life and power of it

Sincerity *towards* Men.

Having thus conſider'd the great virtue of ſincerity, as it reſpects God; I now come to treat of it, as it regards men. He then is a truly ſincere man, who gives the world an aſſurance by the conſtant tenour of his practice that he makes a conſcience of his ways; that he ſcorns to do an unworthy or a baſe thing; to lye, to defraud, or to undermine another's intereſt by any ſiniſter or inferior arts. That perſon is an *Iſraelite indeed*, whoſe tongue is always the interpreter of his mind, and his expreſſions the lively image of his thoughts and affections; who diſcovers himſelf in a conſtant

[k] Hypocrita eſt, qui Theatro alienam perſonam aſſumit. *S. Baſil.*

plainneſs and honeſt openneſs of behaviour, and whoſe outward actions, are all exactly agreeable to his inward purpoſes and intentions. Such a man is highly to be valued, and to be had in honour, by all thoſe that are round about him. For there is not any thing in the World, reflects a greater luſtre upon a man's perſon, than to be plain, juſt, and ſincere in his dealings; and there is not any thing ſhines brighter, than an honeſt, clear, and well-meaning heart, and that even in the eyes of thoſe who are void of it. But, on the contrary, there is not a greater object of ſcorn and contempt, than the hypocrite: His company is juſtly look'd upon as a diſgrace, and no body can own a friendſhip for him, without being an enemy to himſelf. *He that telleth lies* (ſays *David*) *ſhall not tarry in my ſight*, (Pſalm ci. 7.) and indeed, ſuch a perſon ought to be exiled from all worthy and creditable converſe: to be totally abandon'd by every man of ſenſe and conſideration. And beſides this, the fraudulent and deceitful perſon, not only brands himſelf with a laſting, indelible character of ignominy and reproach, but he is put to a thouſand ſhifts, to palliate his fraud, and to be thought an honeſt man. No body would lie and equivocate, did he imagine that his fallacies were tranſparent; an open knave, is a moſt ridiculous fool; becauſe he at once deſtroys both his deſigns, and his reputation: And therefore, the hypocrite is forc'd to be always upon his guard, and to be very circumſpect, leſt he ſhould contradict his own pretenſions; and without doubt, his invention muſt needs be upon the rack having ſo many contradictory ends to bring together. But however, let him take all imaginable care, to ſet a good face

face upon neceſſity; at laſt, his ſubtil tricks and politick devices, will be detected to his everlaſting ſhame and reproach: he may, perhaps, at preſent, appear like the ſelf-adoring *Phariſee*, but truth (however clouded for a time) will break thro' all miſts and glorioufly ſhew itſelf to the diſgrace and confuſion of its moſt formidable oppoſers. And, then, how ſneakingly muſt the poor wretch look, to find himſelf both guilty and baffled too! A knave, without luck, is certainly the worſt trade in the World; but truth and ſincerity make the face of that perſon ſhine, who ſpeaks and owns them: and are, in a word, the nobleſt and moſt commendable qualities that a rational creature can be endued with.

Motives *to* practice.

All which things, ſeriouſly laid together, and conſider'd, will, (I hope) help to illuſtrate the great virtue of ſincerity, both towards God and man. Let us then, begin to endeavour after this excellent quality. Let us expreſs our ſincerity towards God, by being in a continual readineſs, to receive and execute the divine commands, and by making uſe of religion to no end, but what has an immediate tendency to the honour and glory of our great creator. Let us not make a boaſting of our good works, nor blow a trumpet when we give alms; but let us endeavour after the reality of religion, always remembring that a ſincere piety doth not conſiſt in ſhew, but ſubſtance; not in appearance, but in effect. Let us thankfully admire the admirable diſpenſations of the divine providence towards us; and let us praiſe and adore the almighty for all the glorious manifeſtations of his tender mercies, with an unfeigned heart; continually expreſſing our deſires, by our utmoſt

endeavours, that God's will may be done in earth, as it is by the bleſſed Angels, in the kingdom of heaven. And to the ſincerity of our piety towards God, let us add integrity towards one another; by which the common intercourſe of the World muſt be carried on. Let us carefully avoid all lying and equivocation, and be really honeſt, juſt and ſincere in all our dealings. For the Almighty ſeems to ſtate the condition of men's entrance into glory, chiefly upon their fidelity and veracity. *Who ſhall dwell in thy tabernacle?* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *or, who ſhall reſt upon thy holy hill?* To which the reply is, *He that leadeth an uncorrupt life, and doth the thing which is right, and ſpeaketh the truth from his heart.* (Pſalm xv. 12.) Whereas, on the contrary, lyars and hypocrites are inſtanced in Scripture as a ſort of ſinners that ſhall have the ſharpeſt torments and the fierceſt damnation: For, when our Saviour would ſet forth the great ſeverity of the *Lord* towards the evil ſervant, he expreſſeth it thus: *He ſhall cut him aſunder, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites,* (Matt. xxiv. 51.) ſo that the *portion of hypocrites,* ſeems to be made the meaſure and ſtandard of the higheſt puniſhment. Therefore whatever we ſay or do, let it be ſincere; for he will be true to his word, who cannot lie.

The PRAYER.

O THOU great ſearcher of hearts! The God of the ſpirits of all fleſh! whoſe eyes are upon all the ways of the ſons of men, from the very inſtant of their entrance into this World, to that of their departure out of it, that thou mayſt render to every man, according to his deeds: Grant me,

me, O Lord I beſeech thee, thy aſſiſting grace, to enable me to put in practice all the duties of my religion, with a pure and unfeigned heart. Remove far from me, all thoſe vicious diſpoſitions, which might give offence to thoſe eyes, that cannot behold iniquity; and implant in me all thoſe heavenly virtues, in which the God of purity delights. Thou, O Lord! knoweſt all my deſire, and underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off: *Thou perfectly diſcerneſt how holy and upright, how ſincere and unbyaſs'd, all my deſigns and intentions are, towards thee, on whom no diſguiſe can impoſe. Therefore, I entreat thee, by the moſt enlarged bowels of thy indulgent mercy, to reform all the powers and faculties of my ſoul, that my underſtanding may rightly apprehend thee, my will chuſe thee, my memory retain and meditate upon thee, and my whole heart cleave to thee, with immoveable ſtedfaſtneſs and a moſt ſenſible delight. Likewiſe, I beg of thee, who doſt love truth, and hate a lie as perfectly diabolical, that thou wouldſt purge my heart from all hypocriſy and inſincerity towards my neighbour, and inſtill into my ſoul an unalterable love of truth, that nothing may tempt me to deviate from an entire veracity in all my dealings and converſation with men: That ſo, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed, I may appear pure and unblameable, and partake of thoſe rivers of pleaſures, which thou haſt promiſed to thoſe who ſincerely love and fear thee, thro' the merits and mediation of my bleſſed Saviour,* Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty and everlaſting God! who didſt give to thy Apoſtle *Bartholomew* grace truly to believe and to preach thy word: Grant, I beſeech thee, unto thy church, to love that word which he believ'd, and both to preach, and receive the ſame, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt*, our Lord. *Amen.*

St.

Morning. Pſalm 105. *Evening.* 106.

St. MATTHEW's DAY.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. *Ecc.* 35. 2. *Mat.* 22. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. *Ecc.* 38. 2. 1 *Cor.* 6.

ST. *Matthew*, (who is alſo named *Levi*) was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; the ſon of a certain *Jew* named *Alphæus*, and *Mary*, kinſwoman to the bleſſed virgin. We have no certain account of the place of his birth, but in all probability, he was a *Galilean*. He was by profeſſion a *publican*, or toll-gatherer to the *Romans*: An office extremely ſcandalous and odious upon the account of the great extortion practis'd by them, to make their places more advantagious and gainful; inſomuch that *publicans* and ſinners were ſynonimous terms among the *Jews*, and it was a common proverb among the *Gentiles*, *That all* publicans, *were extortioners and thieves*. Of this trade, (as I ſaid before) was our Apoſtle and Evangeliſt: But, as he was one day in his office by the ſea ſide, gathering the cuſtoms, due from ſuch as traffick'd upon the Lake, our Saviour happen'd to paſs by, who ſeeing him *ſit at the receipt of cuſtom*, according to his uſual ſtyle of calling Diſciples, he bid him, *follow him*. *Matthew*, (tho' doubtleſs incumber'd with much buſineſs, yet being touch'd by the divine power) forſook his gainful employment, and by becoming our Lord's diſciple, embrac'd a more ſpiritual way of commerce and traffick: And to ſhew that he was not diſcontented at his change, he made a great feaſt

St. *Matthew, his* names, parentage, *and* profeſſion.

His call to be a Diſciple.

And his ready obedience.

He makes a feaſt.

feaſt at his houſe, and together with his maſter he invited ſeveral *publicans* and heinous *ſinners*. The ſight of which mix'd company, was a great offence to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, and therefore they ask'd the Diſciples, why their Lord would eat and drink, with ſuch profligate wretches; perſons infamous to a proverb? But when our Saviour heard it, he told them, That *they who were whole needed no phyſician, but they that were ſick; and that he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance*, (Matt. ix. 12, 13.) intimating, that his company was moſt ſuitable where the neceſſities of ſouls did moſt require it.

And our Saviour's *diſcourſe to the* Phariſees.

About a year after St. *Matthew*'s call to the diſcipleſhip, he was elected to the apoſtolate, and continued with the reſt till our Lord's aſcenſion; and then for about eight years he preach'd in *Judea*. After that, 'tis ſaid that he travelled into *Parthia*, and from thence went into *Æthiopia*, where he converted multitudes to chriſtianity. But having been very diligent in the propagation of the Goſpel, at laſt he ſuffered martyrdom, in the city of *Naddaber*, in the *Aſiatick Æthiopia*, but the time and manner of his death is very uncertain: tho' ſome affirm, that he was ſlain with an halbert.

The places *where he* preach'd.

His Death.

One Book, which our Apoſtle has left upon record, is, what he calls by the name of Εὐαγγέλιον, or *Goſpel*; becauſe it brought joyful and happy tidings to mankind, namely, pardon and redemption by the blood of *Jeſus*. It was written at the requeſt of the *Jewiſh* converts, and as *Epiphanius* adds, by the appointment of the Apoſtles, about eight years after the death of *Chriſt*; though *Nicephorus* makes it

His Goſpel.

When and why written.

it fifteen after his aſcenſion. But without diſpute, it muſt needs have been written before the diſperſion of the Apoſtles, becauſe St. *Bartholomew* took it along with him into *India*, and left it there. It was written originally in *Hebrew*, which copy has been long ſince loſt, yet the *Greek* verſion remains, being made in the time of the Apoſtles; but by whom it was done we can but barely conjecture. Some attribute it to St. *John*; others to St. *James*, Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*. However, it imports not much, whether it was tranſlated by an Apoſtle, or ſome Diſciple; ſince the Apoſtles both ſaw and approv'd of this verſion, and the Church has ever receiv'd the *Greek* copy for authentick, and repoſed it in the ſacred *Canon*.

Compoſed by him in Hebrew.

The feaſt of our Apoſtle and Evangeliſt is, in the *Greek* Church, kept on the 16th of *November*; but the *Latin* Church celebrates it on the 21ſt of *September*.

His feaſt.

Epiſtle. 2. Cor. 4. from v. 1. to v. 7.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. MATTHEW's DAY.

Goſpel. Mat. 9. from v. 9. to v. 14.

OF all the vices and immoralities incident to human nature, there is not one that has a greater tendency to the infelicity of mankind, both in this World and in the other, than the inordinate love of riches. Covetouſneſs, is certainly, *the root of all evil*, and the original of all injuſtice. 'Tis indeed, one of the greateſt incendiaries in the World; from which proceed

Covetouſneſs, *the nature of it.*

proceed frauds, wars, perjuries, treaſon, diſcords, ambition, robberies, piracies, publick tumults, domeſtick treacheries, corruptions in the ſeat of judgment; and in a word, 'tis a diſtemper that has ſuch a variety of malignant ſymptoms, that it is hard to know what cauſe to aſcribe it to: ſo that the theory of it, is as difficult as the cure. Many, indeed, are the temptations and ſnares of wealth, but above all covetouſneſs is the moſt abſurd and debaſing; for the miſer is poor, let his bags be never ſo full; and the more he has, the more he covets. He heaps up riches, not to enjoy them, but to feed his imagination; ſtarves himſelf in the midſt of plenty, and moſt unnaturally cheats and robs himſelf of that which is his own; and makes a hard ſhift to be as wretched and miſerable with a great eſtate, as any man can be without it. He riſes early, and ſits up late, and purſues his intereſt with a conſtant indefatigable attendance: He never knows when he has ſufficient, but drudges on to the very laſt minute, and ſo dies in his ſlavery. And now, is not this a folly which a wiſe Perſon would think incredible, had he not frequent demonſtrations of the reality hereof? Is it not very prepoſterous, that a man ſhould have all the materials and ingredients of a worldly felicity at his command, and in his power, and yet not have the skill and ability to frame to himſelf, a contented condition of life out of them? Had ſuch a one all the wealth of *Cræſus*, the good fortunes of *Cæſar*, or the dominions of *Alexander*, they would ſignify nothing to him any farther than to humour the deſires of an extravagant fancy; which are ſo far from being quench'd, that they are but the more enflam'd by enjoyment. Therefore let

The folly *of* it.

me

me adviſe all Perſons, of ſuch an unhappy temper, to follow the example of St. *Matthew*, who left all his riches and poſſeſſions, all his ſplendid acquiſitions and preferments to become our Lord's Diſciple, and to make the inviſible joys of another World his greateſt gain. He was a man of a plentiful eſtate, engaged in a very advantagious trade, prompted by covetous inclinations, and theſe confirmed by long habits and cuſtoms. But yet notwithſtanding all this, no ſooner did our Saviour call, but he renounc'd his gainful incomes, and employ'd himſelf in the ſervice of his great Lord and Maſter. This was, certainly, a very wiſe and prudent exchange! For, all the riches in the World, are too empty and ſuperficial, to ſatisfy the deſires of an immortal ſoul. He therefore, that builds his felicity upon a great eſtate, goes upon very precarious grounds, for that cannot be an end ſuitable to a rational nature; but he that can make his duty his delight, that can feaſt and pleaſe and careſs his mind with the pleaſures of worthy ſpeculations or virtuous practices, is the only wiſe and happy man; for this is a pleaſure, high, rational and angelical, ſuch an one as proclaims a jubilee to the mind, as affords a foretaſte of Heaven, and an earneſt of a bleſſed eternity.

St. *Matthew's* converſion.

The wiſdom *thereof.*

And now: The converſion of St. *Matthew*, furniſhes us with this very uſeful conſideration: That the greateſt ſinners are not excluded the lines of divine grace; nor can any (if penitent) have juſt reaſon to deſpair, when *publicans* and *ſinners* are taken in. The goodneſs and kindneſs of the Almighty is the foundation of all our hopes; and thro' his infinite mercy, we may obtain forgiveneſs of our ſins. Mercy and

What we may learn from thence.

and forgiveneſs are God's peculiar poſſeſſion; a principal part of his name; (*Exod.* xxiv. 6.) the chiefeſt of his attributes; and inſeparably annex'd to his eſſence: and therefore, the ſins of his creatures, cannot make any change in him. He can work ſo powerfully upon the minds of men, by his grace and Holy Spirit, as to convince the moſt obſtinate; and ſuppoſing them to be convinc'd and repent, moſt infallibly they will be forgiven. Our Saviour's ſummons, accompanied with the divine grace, enabled St. *Matthew* to ſurmount all covetous deſires, and to conquer all oppoſitions that would have hindred him from the performance of his duty. Thus we ſee, that God, who is omniſcient, can look through all the dark corners of the ſoul of man, all the windings and turnings, and various workings of his faculties; and diſcern how and by what means they are to be wrought upon; and what prevails upon them, and what does not: and ſo if we will but by a ſtedfaſt reſolution cloſe in with the ſuggeſtions of God's Holy Spirit, he will be ready to forgive us the puniſhment due to our ſins, and to cleanſe us from all our iniquities. Our heavenly Father hath not made the way to eternal life difficult to any of us, with a deſign to make us miſerable; but that we, by a vigorous reſolution and unwearied diligence, and a *patient continuance in well-doing*, might win and wear a more glorious crown, and be fit to receive a more ample reward from his bounty and goodneſs, in the regions of bliſs and immortality.

The influence it ought to have on our lives.

The conſideration whereof, ought to make us immediately call on God for the auxiliaries of divine grace to enable us (with St. *Matthew*)

thew) to follow the captain of our ſalvation, with indefatigable vigour; and to reſign all our temporal intereſts, whenever they come in competition with our duty to God. It ought to be a prevalent argument with us, to yield a ready and chearful obedience to all the divine laws; which is certainly the moſt reaſonable and wiſe, the moſt comfortable and compendious courſe, that any man can take in order to his own happineſs. Let us then, daily and inceſſantly pray to God for his grace, to diſpoſe our minds and to direct all our ſkill and knowledge to the purpoſes of a good life. Let us beg of him, to convince us of the infinite vanity and folly of placing our happineſs and content in riches and honour. And withal let us conſider the vaſt diſproportion between the beſt things of this world, and the largeneſs, the immenſity of our capacities and appetites, which are to be ſatisfied with nothing leſs than infinity: And conſequently, let us propoſe to our ſelves better objects of content than any this World can afford us, and endeavour to be rich towards God in this life, and to arrive at the bliſsful enjoyment of him in the other; *In whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right-hand are pleaſures for evermore.* Concluſion.

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty and moſt merciful God and Saviour! whoſe powerful call drew* Matthew *the* Publican *from the very receipt of cuſtom, to become an eminent Apoſtle and Evangeliſt in thy Church. Grant me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, thy aſſiſting grace, that I may never be deaf to the im-*

portunities of a loving Saviour, nor reject the offers of thy holy Spirit: But that I may with a steady and generous resolution, quit all my temporal advantages to come to thee. I do believe, O blessed Jesus! *the benefit is great if I forsake my evil ways, whilst thy grace is freely offer'd to all the world: And I know the Danger is dreadful, if I defer any longer; and therefore, O Lord, I return to thee without delay. O remember not how long I have stray'd, but consider how little time I have left, and by thy all-powerful help make my work short and easy, proportionable to my time and strength. Oh! let me not any more place my joy and happiness upon the good things of this life, which perish and cannot satisfy; but in thee the eternal fountain of all felicity. Turn the vehemence of my desires upon the right object, and make me contented, and thankful, and well pleas'd with that portion thy providential love has allotted me, and to acquiesce in thy choice as best for me. If I am unmeasurably ambitious, let it be only of thy favour; if I am insatiably covetous, let it be only of thy fruition; and if I am perpetually discontented, let it be only because I cannot love thee enough: So shall I triumph over all my present imperfections, till I come at length to be made perfect in the beatifick vision, where the blessed inhabitants of Heaven sing perpetual anthems of praise to the undivided* Trinity, *to whom be all glory and honour, adoration and thanksgiving, now and to all eternity.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who by thy bleſſed Son didſt call *Matthew* from the receipt of cuſtom, to be an Apoſtle and Evangeliſt: Grant me grace to forſake all covetous deſires, and inordinate love of riches, and to follow the ſame, thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt*, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghoſt, World without end. *Amen*.

Morning. Pſalm. 139, 140, 141.

Evening. 142, 143.

THE Feaſt of St. MICHAEL, and All ANGELS.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. Gen. 32. 2. Act. 12. *to* v. 20.

Evening. 1. Leſſ. Dan. 10. v. 5. 2. Jude. v. 6. *to* v. 16.

ON this feſtival we celebrate the memorial of St.[1] *Michael* the *Arch-Angel*, and Prince of the heavenly Hoſt; who is ſaid to have an army of *Angels* under his command and conduct, and with them to have fought with the *Dragon*, or *Satan* and his apoſtate *Angels*. For ſo we read (in *Rev.* xii. 7.) of a *war in Heaven*, (or the airy region, of which the *Devil* is call'd the Prince) Michael *and his* Angels *fought againſt the* Dragon, *and the* Dragon *fought and his Angels*; which war *Michael* undertook (as the foregoing verſes tell us,) in defence of the *woman that was cloath'd with the Sun*, which all agree was the chriſtian Church: So alſo in St. *Jude*'s Epiſtle, (v. 9.) we read that *Michael, the Arch-Angel, contended and diſputed with the* Devil *about the body of* Moſes, or *Jewiſh* Church, ſo call'd for the ſame reaſon, that the chriſtian Church is call'd the body of *Chriſt*. Several very learned expoſitors tell us, that this *war in Heaven* denoted the great contention at *Rome*, between *Simon Peter* on the one ſide, and *Simon Magus*, that apoſtate ſervant of the *Devil*, at St. *Peter*'s ſecond coming to

St. Michael *and his Angels fought with the* Dragon *and his Angels.*

What this Combat (*probably*) *ſignifies.*

[1] Hebr. *Who is like God.*

Rome

Rome in *Nero*'s time; the one contending for *Chriſt*, and the other againſt him. *And the great Dragon was caſt out*, &c. *(i. e.)* By this means the *Devil* (that doth ſo oppoſe the chriſtian faith) was caſt out of his unlimited power in mens hearts; and many upon this victory of *Peter* over *Simon Magus* turn'd Chriſtians. But certain it is, that the meaning of that paſſage in the *Revelations*, (Chap. xii.) was no otherwiſe than this: That *Chriſt* and his members fought againſt the *Devil* and his inſtruments: And the *Devil* was totally vanquiſh'd by the *ſeed of the woman*, which was promiſed ſhould *break the ſerpent's head:* But at the ſame time, tho' *Chriſt* was ſupreme, yet St. *Michael* was manifeſtly a great commander under him, and a glorious inſtrument in the victory.

St. Michael his contention with the Devil about the body of Moſes.

As to that paſſage in St. *Jude*, (v. 9.) where *Michael*, the *Arch-Angel*, is ſaid to have *contended with the* Devil *about the Body of* Moſes; an ingenious [m] writer explains it by another paſſage *(Deut.* xxxiv. 6.*)* where it is ſaid, that *God took particular care* (probably by an *Angel*) *concerning the burying of* Moſes *in a certain valley*; (and it is added) *but no man knoweth of his ſepulchre to this day.* The *Devil* (it ſeems) had a fair proſpect of laying a foundation for idolatry in the worſhip of *Moſes* after his death, if he could have gotten the diſpoſal of his body, to have bury'd it in ſome known and publick place; and no doubt it would have gratified him not a little, to have made him who was ſo declared an enemy to idolatry all his life, an occaſion of it after his death. But this God thought fit to prevent in pity

The meaning thereof.

[m] *Archbiſhop* Tillotſon.

to the people of *Iſrael*, whom he ſaw upon all occaſions ſo prone to idolatry; and for that reaſon committed the body of *Moſes* to the charge of St. *Michael* to bury it ſecretly: And this was the thing which *Michael*, the *Arch-Angel contended with the* Devil *about*.

The deſign of this Feſtival.

And although this Feſtival generally bears the name of St. *Michael*'s day, yet doth the Church herein celebrate the general memorial of *All Angels*; praiſing the Almighty for the great and innumerable benefits which mankind enjoyeth both in ſoul and body by their appointed aid and miniſtration. Concerning the nature of *Angels* it is univerſally agreed, by all that acknowledge ſuch an order of beings, that they are *Spirits*. Some of the ancient philoſophers (as Archbiſhop *Tillotſon* obſerves) believ'd them to be clothed with ſome kind of bodies, conſiſting of the pureſt and fineſt matter which they call *Ætherial:* And this opinion (ſays the ſame Author) ſeems to be grounded upon a pious belief, that it is the peculiar excellency and perogative of the divine Nature to be a pure and ſimple *Spirit*, wholly ſeparate from *matter*. Indeed, the more current opinion of the chriſtian Church hath been that *Angels* are pure *Spirits*, without any thing that is material or corporeal belonging to them: But whether they are ſo or no; that is, whether they are beings ſo diſtinct from *matter*, as to be diveſted of all kind of corporeal *vehicle*, hath been a great controverſy; but this affects no neceſſary article of faith. And therefore, I ſhall not entertain my reader with any nice and curious ſpeculations concerning the nature of *Angels*; but ſhall endeavour, in a few words, to ſet down what it concerns us more to know:

The nature of Angels.

Namely,

Namely, what their *office* and *employment* is in regard to us.

Now, the ſpecial office and employment of good *Angels* in regard to men, is their declaring upon occaſions God's mind and will to his Church and People; for thus moſt of thoſe prophetick meſſages, which the Almighty from time to time ſent to the World, were convey'd to the Prophets by the miniſtry of *Angels*. *Daniel* (for inſtance) had all his viſions from an *Angel* of God. And an *Angel* was ſent to *Abraham* to foretel the miraculous birth of his ſon *Iſaac*; and afterwards to reſcue him from being ſacrificed: *Cornelius* likewiſe received a meſſage from *Chriſt* by an *Angel*, requiring him to ſend to *Joppa* for St. *Peter* to inſtruct him in the chriſtian Religion: Many other inſtances hereof we have both in the Old and New Teſtament. But beſides this, the *Angels* of God are appointed to guard and defend good men againſt all outward dangers and calamities; and (as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerves) to *encamp round about thoſe that fear God to deliver them.* (Pſalm xxxiv. 7.) And again, *There ſhall no evil befal thee, for he ſhall give his Angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they ſhall bear thee up in their hands, leſt thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* (Pſalm xci. 10, 11, 12.) Nay, it was a current opinion among the primitive Chriſtians, [n] that every good man had his particular *Guardian Angel*. For thus, not only our Saviour himſelf was comforted in his laſt agony by an *Angel* from Heaven; (*Luke* xxii. 43.) but we find that

The office *and* employment *of good* Angels.

[n] Mira Animarum dignitas, ut quævis ab ortu Angelum habeat delegatum! *Hieron.*

when St. *Peter* was miraculouſly deliver'd out of priſon by an *Angel*, and came to the houſe where the Chriſtians were aſſembled to pray for him, one told them that *Peter* was at the door; but they immediately reply'd, *It was his Angel:* Not queſtioning but he himſelf was faſt in priſon. So that we have great reaſon to believe, that every good man has his appropriate *Guardian Angel*, to take a ſpecial care of him and his concernments both ſpiritual and temporal; to guard him from dangers, to direct and proſper him in his way; to comfort and deliver him in his afflictions and diſtreſſes, and to protect him againſt the rage and fury of the Spirits of *Darkeneſs*. It is for no mean end certainly that ſuch high and glorious Spirits are employ'd about us; and therefore, we may conclude that they are particularly engag'd for the furtherance of our ſalvation. And in order to this end, it is very probable that they are preſent in the places, and at the times of God's publick worſhip, to be aſſiſtants to us in the performance of all acts of Religion; to remove our indiſpoſitions, and recollect our wanderings; to fix our attention, excite our affections, and inflame our devotions: For ſince they are ſaid to *miniſter to them who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation*, (Heb. i. 14.) there is no doubt, but that they *miniſter* to them in the diſcharge of all thoſe religious obligations upon which their *ſalvation* depends. And as they are thus ſedulous and officious in working out our ſalvation, throughout the whole courſe of our lives; ſo at the hour of death they attend upon every good man's deceaſe, to receive his ſoul into their cuſtody as ſoon as ever it is expir'd, and to guard it againſt evil Spirits as it paſſes through

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the air (which is tthe ſeat and principality of the apoſtate *Angels*) and after that, to conduct it to thoſe bleſſed manſions where it is to abide till the reſurrection. An inſtance hereof we have in the parable of the *rich Man* and *Lazarus* (Luke xvi. 22.) where 'tis ſaid, *that when* Lazarus *died, he was carried by Angels into* Abraham's *boſom.* And no doubt, but thoſe bleſſed Spirits who are ſo highly ſatisfi'd in the *converſion of a ſinner*, are ready enough to guide and aſſiſt the *Spirits of juſt men* in their paſſage to everlaſting bliſs.

The office *and* employment *of evil* Angels.

But now on the other hand, the office and employment of bad *Angels* conſiſt in trying and exerciſing the virtues of God's favourites: For this being a ſtate of probation, the all-wiſe Governor of Heaven and Earth hath thought fit to ſurround us with the temptations of evil Spirits, that we may never want opportunity to exert and exerciſe our virtues, and to give the moſt glorious proofs of our courage and perſeverance. This was the caſe of holy *Job*, upon whom God let looſe *Satan* and his inſtruments to try his faith and patience, his conſtancy and reſignation to his Maker. Nay, our Saviour himſelf a little before his crucifixion, (being abandon'd of the ordinary ſupports of his God-head) was aſſaulted by the *Devils*, as well as by the *Jews*; for God thought fit to give them his free permiſſion to try him to the utmoſt: But in that victorious act of laying down his life for us, (in deſpite of their moſt exquiſite temptations to the contrary) he made a glorious conqueſt of thoſe infernal powers. Thus we ſee that Almighty God permits the *Devil* and his *Angels* to aſſault the beſt of men, to keep them upon their

their guard and to make them more watchful and vigilant; but at the ſame time he does not leave them without ſufficient ſtrength and aſſiſtance, to repel their moſt powerful temptations. But on the other hand, the Scriptures tell us that wicked men are *led captive by* Satan *at his pleaſure*; and that the *Evil-one works and acts in the children of diſobedience.* For when men have baffled God's gracious deſigns of ſaving them by their continu'd obſtinacy and diſobedience; he many times withdraws from them the influences of his divine grace, and thoſe powerful aids of his holy *Angels*, which they have ſo often rejected; and utterly abandons them to the powers of Darkneſs; who having once obtain'd the poſſeſſion of them, continually puſh them forward from one degree of wickedneſs to another, till in the end they bring them to the moſt intolerable and laſting miſery that humane nature is capable of. For, *when the Son of Man ſhall come in his glory with his holy Angels, and ſhall ſit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations ſhall be gather'd before him*; then ſhall the *Devil* and his *Angels* hurry the *wicked into everlaſting puniſhment*, but the *righteous* ſhall be triumphantly conducted by all the bleſs'd inhabitants of Heaven *into life eternal.*

For the Epiſtle. Rev. 12. *from* v. 7. *to* v. 13.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. MICHAEL'S DAY, &c.

Goſpel. Matt. 18. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 11.

The aid and miniſtration of good angels, an excellent motive to praiſe and thankſgiving.

IT is certainly, the indiſpenſable duty of every perſon, who profeſſes chriſtianity, thankfully to praiſe, magnify, and adore the wiſe Creator and Governour of Heaven and earth, for his ineſtimable love and kindneſs to the Sons of men, in not only making the viſible creation for their uſe and ſervice; but, even the nobleſt of all his creatures, the great and glorious inhabitants of the inviſible world. I ſay, that our heavenly Father, ſhould give theſe excellent and angelical Beings the charge over us; and ſend them forth to miniſter to us, for the ſafeguard of our perſons, for the ſucceſs of our affairs, and for the ſecurity and furtherance of our eternal ſalvation; is ſuch a ſtupendous expreſſion of his unparallel'd love, that it ought to be the glad ſubject of our never-ceaſing Hallelujahs. The ſnares and temptations of the powers of darkneſs are ſo numerous and prevailing, that did not the bleſſed orders of intellectual ſpirits interpoſe on our behalf, we ſhould be utterly vanquiſh'd and deſtroy'd. But, Almighty God, out of his inexhauſtible mercy and compaſſion, has appointed the family of Heaven, to pitch their tents round about us, and to guard the paſſes of our outward ſenſes, that no unclean thing enter there: So that, the great adverſary of ſouls, how mighty and formidable ſoever in himſelf, will not be able to break through theſe bright armies, nor dare

dare to make his attacks, which he foreſees will prove unſucceſsful. And now, ſince God has thought fit, to provide ſuch excellent and accompliſh'd creatures, for our benefit and advantage; ſurely, we cannot remain inſenſible under ſo gracious a diſpenſation. It muſt needs prevail upon us, to cloſe in with the *Pſalmiſt*, ſaying, *Praiſe the Lord, O my ſoul! Who makes his* Angels *Spirits, and his miniſters a flaming fire*, (Pſal. civ. 4.) And, conſidering that our heavenly Father hath innumerable bleſſed Spirits (which mightily ſurpaſs us mortal men) to execute his commands; we ought correſpondently to endeavour to ſerve God, and to do his will here on earth (ſo far as the infirmity of our nature, and of our preſent ſtate will admit) with the ſame readineſs and diligence, the ſame chearfulneſs and alacrity, as the glorious hoſts of Heaven do.

Angels *to be imitated by men.*

For, without doubt, every perſon, muſt acknowledge it an excellent and noble employment, to follow the examples of thoſe celeſtial ſpirits, which in the regions of bliſs, do delight inceſſantly to ſerve their maker. Our Saviour, has made them our pattern in his prayer, and conſequently, we ſhould make them ſo in our lives, by endeavouring to perform God's *will on Earth as it is in Heaven.* There, the ſociety of the bleſſed, execute the divine will, with a full, entire, and perfect conſent. There, they continually contemplate the ſuperlative excellencies of the Deity; the beauty of his holineſs, the perfection of his wiſdom, the greatneſs of his power, and the riches of his mercy. This, fills their hearts with inexpreſſible joy, and having nothing to diſturb them, in their beatifical employment, they unanimouſly joyn

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in chearful praiſes and rapturous Hallelujahs, with an uninterrupted perſeverance. Now, every man, that hopes to be like the *Angels* in Heaven, muſt endeavour to be like them on Earth. 'Tis true, we cannot come up to all the meaſures and attainments of angelical obedience, becauſe 'tis beyond the capacity of our preſent condition: but at the ſame time we may ſo far imitate them, as to have always in view that eternal weight of glory, that incorruptible crown, with which the *ſufferings of this preſent life, are not worthy to be compar'd.* We may prepare our ſelves for their delightful company, by meditating upon the delicious repaſts of hymns and anthems, and that more raviſhing harmony of divine love and intellectual ſympathy; upon the elevated and raiſed perfections of a glorified ſoul, and upon the angelical clarity and divine temper of an incorruptible body: and in a word, upon thoſe immortal glories, and inconceiveable joys, which God *has prepared for thoſe that love him.*

The worſhip of them forbid.

But, now, after all, I think it may not be unſeaſonable to remove one error, which prevails mightily in the Church of *Rome*, and that is, the ſolemn invocation and worſhip of *Saints* and *Angels.* God is certainly the only object of our truſt and confidence; and therefore to him alone, and to no other, we ought to addreſs all our prayers and ſupplications. Whereas, the *Romaniſts* repoſe their confidence in an innumerable company of *Saints* and *Angels*; not only for temporal good things, but for the pardon of their ſins, for the increaſe of their graces, and for eternal life. For thus, in the very *Roman Miſſal* it ſelf, they make confeſſion of their ſins to God Almighty, *and the bleſſed*

bleſſed Virgin Mary; *to St.* Michael *the* Arch-Angel, *and to all the* Saints. And in their abſolution they join together the *paſſions of our* Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *and merits of the bleſſed* Virgin, *and of all the* Saints, *for the remiſſion of ſins.* This is ſtripping the Almighty of his divine prerogatives and no better than downright idolatry, and making other mediators of interceſſion: This is highly inconſiſtent, both with the Scriptures and the doctrine and practice of the primitive ages of Chriſtianity. We ought only to pray to God, becauſe he only is Lord *over all:* And we ought to offer up our prayers, only by the mediation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, becauſe he is our *only Mediator and Advocate.* We may be aſſur'd, that whatever we faithfully aſk in his name ſhall be granted us; and therefore, why ſhould I apply myſelf to St. *Peter*; tho' he is ſaid to have the keys of heaven or the Church? Or to *Michael* the *Arch-Angel*, tho' he is the chief of the miniſtring Spirits? For, I can neither diſtruſt the kindneſs and affection of my bleſſed Redeemer, nor his power and intereſt in the court above, to obtain at God's hands, all thoſe bleſſings which I ſtand in need of.

Concluſion.

Let us therefore on this day, beware of putting our truſt or confidence in any thing, either in Heaven or Earth, beſides one almighty and ever-living God; let us imitate the holy *Angels* by endeavouring to ſerve our heavenly Father as they do; let us magnify and adore our great Creator, for the inviſible aids and protections of theſe glorious Beings; and let us agree in a ſweet harmony with all the inhabitants of the heavenly *Jeruſalem:* that ſo, when we ſhall lay down this load of mortality, we may be for *ever with the* Lord, amidſt *an innumerable company of*

of Angels, *and the Spirits of juſt men made perfect.*

The PRAYER.

GREAT and glorious Lord God! the high and holy one, who inhabiteſt eternity, and dwelleſt in that light, which no mortal eye can approach: I beſeech thee to look down from Heaven, the habitation of thy holineſs and thy glory, upon me thy ſervant, and endue me with all thoſe graces and diſpoſitions, which may qualify me to celebrate thy praiſe. O Lord! let me be ſenſibly affected with thine ineſtimable goodneſs and mercy, that ſo, I may readily adore the brightneſs of thy majeſty, and join my heart and voice with the bleſſed inhabitants of heaven, in hymns of joy and thankſgiving. The numerous progeny of Angels *and celeſtial ſpirits, always behold the glories of thy eſſence; they have the beatifick viſion of thy incomparable beauty, and read in thee the counſels of thy eternal will and wiſdom: Lord! give me grace, in imitation of thoſe bleſſed ſpirits to ſet thee always before me, and to fix my ſerious contemplation on thee. Raviſh my Soul with a lively ſenſe of all thy divine attributes, and make it my whole delight and ſatisfaction to ſerve thee with an uninterrupted obedience. O give thy holy* Angels *charge over me, to defend me from all the ſnares and temptations of the powers of darkneſs; and at the hour of death, to conduct my departed ſoul into the regions of bliſs and immortality: That ſo, having* fought a good fight, and finiſhed my courſe, *I may be admitted with* Angels and Arch-Angels, and with all the company of Heaven, to laud and magnify thy glorious name; evermore praiſ-

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ſing thee, and ſaying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hoſts! Heaven and Earth are full of thy glory: Glory be to thee, O Lord, moſt high! *Amen.*

The COLLECT.

O Everlaſting God! who haſt ordain'd and conſtituted the ſervices of *Angels* and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant, that as thy holy Angels always do thee ſervice in Heaven; ſo by thy appointment they may ſuccour and defend me on earth, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

St.

Morning. Pſalm 90, 91, 92. *Evening.* 93, 94.

St. Luke's Day.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Eccl. 51. 2. Luk. 4. *Evening.* 1 Leſſ. Job 1. 2. Gal. 4.

ST. *Luke* was born at *Antioch* the metropolis of *Syria*, a City celebrated for one of the moſt flouriſhing academies in the World, repleniſh'd with ſchools of ſound literature, and very eminent profeſſors of all arts and ſciences; but above all, it was famous for being the place where the Diſciples were firſt called Chriſtians. Here was our Evangeliſt educated from his childhood, and enriched with the treaſure of all kinds of humane learning: And for his better improvement, he viſited the chief academies of *Aſia* and *Greece*. Being thus furniſh'd with ſkill, in all the preparatory inſtitutions of philoſophy, he particularly apply'd himſelf to the ſtudy of *phyſick*, in which he became an admirable proficient. He likewiſe acquired a very great reputation for his exquiſite ſkill in *painting*; and there's an ancient inſcription, found in a vault near the Church of St. *Mary in Via lata* at *Rome*, wherein mention is made of a valuable picture of the *Virgin Mary*, UNA EX VII AB LUCA DEPICTIS, *being one of the ſeven painted by St.* Luke.

St. *Luke's* birth-place.

His learned and liberal education.

His ſtudy of phyſick.

And skill in painting.

Our Evangeliſt however was a conſtant and inſeparable companion of St. *Paul*, (as is manifeſt from numerous paſſages in his *Acts* of the Apoſtles, where ſpeaking of St. *Paul* he frequently uſes the firſt perſon plural, *Acts* xvi.

His conſtant attendance on St. Paul.

10, 11. xx. 5, 6, &c.) by whom he was converted at *Antioch*, tho' ſome ſay at *Thebes*; but wherever it was, 'tis moſt certain, that St. *Paul* had a more than ordinary kindneſs for him, owning him for his *fellow-labourer*; calling him the *beloved phyſician*, and the *brother whoſe praiſe is in the Goſpel*. It is ſaid that he left St. *Paul* at *Rome*, and went *Eaſt-ward*; preaching in *Ægypt* and ſeveral parts of *Libya*. *Epiphanius* tells us, that he planted the faith, firſt in *Dalmatia* and *Gallia*, and then in *Italy* and *Macedonia*. As to the time and manner of his death, we have no authentick account. Some ſay he died in *Ægypt*, others in *Greece:* The *Roman Martyrology* in *Bithynia*; *Dorotheus* at *Epheſus*; and *Paulinus* Biſhop of *Nola*, affirms he died a martyr, whereof *Nicephorus* gives the following account: That as he was zealouſly performing the office of his miniſtry in *Greece*, he was ſet upon by the *Plebeian* ſort, who drew him to execution, and for want of a croſs, hang'd him upon an olive-tree, in the 84th year of his age. His body by the command of *Conſtantine* (or his ſon *Conſtantius*) was buried in the great Church at *Conſtantinople*.

The places *where he* preached.

His death.

The writings which our Evangeliſt left to poſterity, are his *Goſpel*, and the hiſtory of the *Apoſtolical Acts*. The firſt of which was compoſed in *Achaia*, by the particular aſſiſtance of S. *Paul*, and dedicated to one *Theophilus*, (denoting a lover of God) with the title of *moſt excellent*; who probably was ſome magiſtrate of *Antioch*, converted and baptiz'd by him. It begins at the Angel *Gabriel*'s foretelling *John Baptiſt*'s birth, and ends with the aſcenſion of our bleſſed Saviour; ſo that it is an hiſtory including, according to a preciſe reckoning, 38 years, wanting one month.

His Goſpel *written in* Achaia.

His

His hiſtory of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, was written at *Rome*, at the time of his being there with St. *Paul*, in his firſt impriſonment. It is dedicated to the ſame *Theophilus* to whom he had dedicated his *Goſpel*: The one containing the miracles of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the other thoſe of the *Holy Ghoſt*. It is intituled *Acts* Πραξεις, *of the Apoſtles*; becauſe it contains the hiſtory of what the Apoſtles did at *Jeruſalem* and *Judæa*, for abour twelve years after the aſcenſion of our Saviour. But more particularly, he gives an account of the travels, actions, and ſermons of St. *Paul*, till the end of his two years confinement at *Rome*. In both theſe books, his way and manner of writing (ſays an ingenious author) is exact and accurate; his ſtyle polite and elegant, ſublime and lofty, and yet clear and perſpicuous; flowing with an eaſy and natural grace and ſweetneſs; admirably accommodated to an hiſtorical deſign, all along expreſſing himſelf in a vein of purer *Greek*, than is to be found in the other writers of the holy ſtory: By all which, one may plainly perceive, how great a ſhare he had in the native genius of *Antioch*, a place univerſally celebrated for oratory and eloquence. So that in ſhort, (in the language of the ſame excellent author) as an *hiſtorian*, he was faithful in his relations, elegant in his writings: As a *Miniſter*, careful and diligent for the good of ſouls: As a *Chriſtian*, devout and pious; and who crown'd all the reſt with the laying down his life for the teſtimony of that Goſpel, which he had both preach'd and publiſh'd to the World.

The Acts of the Apoſtles *written at* Rome, *and when.*

A character *of his* writings.

Epiſtle. 2 Tim. 4. *from* v. 5. *to* v. 16.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. LUKE's DAY.

Goſpel. Luke 10. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 8.

Learning *the excellency thereof.*

LEarning is, without diſpute, one of the moſt excellent qualifications that a reaſonable creature can be endu'd with. It brightens our intellectual faculties, and furniſhes us with thoſe ſhining excellencies which will render us ſerviceable to the great ends and purpoſes of human life. Our underſtanding was given by God, not for ſluggiſhneſs and inactivity, but to improve and cultivate it with all thoſe glorious endowments that are ſuitable to a rational nature: And we are moſt certain that a Spirit of ſloth and inactivity can't be the Spirit of religion or Chriſtianity. Learning is properly putting the ſoul into its beſt poſture, and is the nobleſt and moſt refin'd improvement of our being, and conſequently nothing can be more beautiful in it ſelf, or more acceptable to a great and generous mind.

Our Evangeliſt, St. *Luke*, was very eminent for his extraordinary learning and knowledge, which (being heighten'd by inſpiration) enabled him to preach ſucceſsfully thro' ſeveral countries, and to publiſh that admirable hiſtory of the Goſpel which has been univerſally celebrated and admir'd in all ages of the chriſtian Church. So that he was a common bleſſing and advantage to all the world by bringing mankind to the *knowledge of the truth*, (1 Tim. ii. 4.) that is, the doctrine of the Goſpel; ſo called, in reſpect of its excellency and ſublimity, being the moſt profitable that ever was revealed.

ed. For therein we may make discoveries of the superlative glorious attributes and immense perfections of our great Creator, and of the transcendent greatness of redeeming love! There we may be made sensible of the vital principles and powers of Christianity, and be entertain'd with such copious arguments as contain in them the most noble and admirable points of enquiry; such as are able to stir up and provoke the largest capacities, and yet invite and encourage the meanest. From hence the unparallel'd excellency of evangelical knowledge doth arise: All other knowledge is insignificant without it, because that alone directly tends to our perfection and happiness. Knowledge *of the* Gospel *excels all other* Sciences.

Let us then with the greatest joy and exultation receive those glad tidings of salvation which our Evangelist publish'd to the world. Let us frequently and considerately search into that excellent treasure of wisdom and knowledge which he has left to posterity; and not only so, but put in practice all those admirable virtues for which he was eminent. Practice is the life and soul of Religion: It is that which translates Christianity from a bare notion into reality; from useless speculations into substantial duties, and from an idea in the brain into an existence in the life. And, without doubt, there is no such prevailing method to cause men to *glorify our heavenly Father*, as by making our *light to shine before them.* To secure the speculative part of Religion, can never be meritorious enough to carry a man to Heaven, unless all his actions are perfectly conformable to the rules of piety and holiness; for the Almighty has declar'd against any other way of judging men but according to their works. Motives *to* Practice.

Conclusion.

To conclude: Let us begin on this very day in every particular to act in conformity to the dictates of that high and divine principle, right reason; for as long as reason keeps her ground, religion neither can nor will lose hers. Let us vigorously endeavour to make an interest in God's favour upon such grounds and terms as the Scripture lays down: And what those are, we have sufficiently mark'd out to us in those plain and legible lines of duty, requiring us to *keep a conscience void of offence both towards God and towards Man:* Or in other terms, to *live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world,*

The PRAYER.

O *God, of infinite and adorable goodness! who out of thine inexhaustible treasure of wisdom and power, didst enable thy servant St.* Luke *to preach the glad tydings of the Gospel for the salvation of mankind: Mercifully grant, I most humbly beseech thee, that his excellent doctrine may have a most prevailing influence upon my heart, and that his exemplary life and conversation may encourage me to persevere in the paths of piety and holiness.* Open mine eyes, O Lord! that I may see *and admire* the wondrous things of thy law; *and enlighten my understanding that I may learn that delightful way which leads to everlasting life. Let not Satan have any power over me, but assist me by thy grace and holy Spirit in the faithful discharge of all thy divine commandments. Oh!* let me live the life of the righteous, and let my latter end be like theirs, *that so by imitating thy Saints in this state of tryal and probation, I may follow them in their happy passage out of this world, and be admitted with them to thine*

everlasting

everlaſting glories in the Kingdom of Heaven, thro' the merits and mediation of Jeſus Chriſt *my bleſſed Saviour and Redeemer; to whom with thee and the Holy Ghoſt be all honour and glory, now, and for ever.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who called'ſt *Luke* the phyſician, whoſe praiſe is in the Goſpel, to be an Evangeliſt and phyſician of ſouls: may it pleaſe thee, that by the wholſome medicines of the doctrine deliver'd by him, all the diſeaſes of my ſoul may be heal'd, thro' the merits of thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm 132, 133, 134, 135.
Evening. 136, 137, 138.

St. Simon and Jude's Day.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Job 24. 25. 2. Luke 14.
Evening. 1 Leſſ. Job 42. 2 Phil. 2.

St. Simon *whence ſtyl'd the* Canaanite.

ST. *Simon* the Apoſtle was born (as ſome think) in *Cana* of *Galilee*, for which reaſon they conclude, that he was ſir-nam'd the *Canaanite*; tho' others reject this opinion as weak and precarious, believing him to derive his name from his great zeal for the honour of the chriſtian faith, rather than from his country (*Canaanite* being in *Hebrew*, what *Zelotes* is in *Greek*, which ſignifies *Zealot*) or elſe from a particular ſect among the *Jews*, call'd the *Zealots*; which ſect began in *Mattathias*, the root of the *Maccabæan* family, and was continu'd among the *Jews* till after our Saviour's time. The evangelical hiſtory gives us very little account of St. *Simon*, more than that he was ſo eminent for his ſublime faith and exalted charity, that our bleſſed Saviour choſe him into the number of his twelve Apoſtles. After his election he continu'd with his brethren till their diſperſion up and down the world into their ſeveral provinces; and then he is ſaid to have journey'd into *Ægypt*, *Cyrene*, and *Africa*; and that after many converts made in thoſe parts, he travelled into *Libya* and *Mauritania*, where he not only diſplay'd the glory of *Jeſus Chriſt* by his preaching, but by a great number of miracles. And at laſt, (as *Nicephorus* and *Dorotheus* affirm) he came over into the *Weſtern Iſlands*, and

And the Zealot.

The places *where he preached the* Goſpel.

and in particular into *Great Britain*, where having converted multitudes to the Faith, he was after many perſecutions, crucified by the Infidels, and underwent all with incredible reſignation and courage. Thus much in relation to S. *Simon*. *His* Martyrdom.

St. *Jude* the Apoſtle was ſometimes called *Thaddæus*, or *Lebbæus*; which names were given him, partly to diſtinguiſh him from *Judas* the Apoſtate, and partly as a commendation of his wiſdom and zeal; for *Lebbæus* (according to St. *Jerome*) ſignifies a man of wit and underſtanding, and *Thaddæus* denotes a perſon zealous in praiſing God. He was the ſon of *Joſeph*, and brother to *James* Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, a character by which he is deſcrib'd in the evangelical ſtory more than once. He was a married man, and had children, and his wife (according to *Nicephorus*) was named *Mary*. He was elected to the apoſtolate *Anno Chriſti* 31, and became from that time a conſtant attendant upon our Saviour's perſon. After our Lord's aſcenſion, our Apoſtle was ſent by St. *Thomas* to *Abgarus* governour of *Edeſſa*, where by his preaching and miracles he converted *Abgarus* and his people to the faith. The general account of his travels is, that he went up and down preaching the Goſpel in *Judæa* and *Galilee*; then viſited *Samaria*, *Idumæa*, and ſome parts of *Arabia*; afterwards *Syria* and *Meſopotamia*; and at laſt (as *Nicephorus* relates) he come to *Edeſſa*, where after great ſucceſs in his apoſtolical miniſtry he died a quiet and peaceable death. Some will have it that he was ſlain at *Berytus*; and the writers of the *Latin* Church, unanimouſly agree that he travelled into *Perſia*, and for his reproving the ſuperſtitious S. Jude *his ſeveral* Names. *His* Parentage *and* Relations. *The* places *where he* preach'd.

His death. ſtitious rites of the *Magi*, was cruelly put to death; but this is too infirm a foundation to build any thing more upon than a mere conjecture.

His Epiſtle. One Epiſtle there is of St. *Jude*'s writing, which is receiv'd as canonical. The deſign of it is to preſerve Chriſtians from the infection of the *Gnoſticks*, and the debauch'd principles of *Simon Magus*. His Feaſt, (according to the ancient martyrologies,) is to be obſerv'd on the 28th day of *October*.

Epiſtle. Jude *from* V. 1. *to* V. 8.

MEDITATIONS FOR St. SIMON and JUDE's DAY.

Goſpel. John 15. *from* V. 17. *to the end.*

The Obligations we lie under to be zealous for God's Honour.

ZEAL when applied to thoſe things, wherein the honour of our great Creator, and the ſalvation of mens ſouls are concern'd, is doubtleſs very laudable and commendable. For the tranſcendent excellency and inconceivable purity of the divine nature, together with the Almighty's immenſe bounty and liberality towards his creatures, challenge from them a moſt profound zeal for his honour and glory. In the beginning he created man after his own image; he endued him with a large and capacious underſtanding, a well-regulated will, and with all thoſe ſhining excellencies, that were ſuitable to a rational nature. This was certainly a glorious demonſtration of the munificent goodneſs of our heavenly Father! but as a ſuperlative addition to thoſe aſtoniſhing favours, he ſent his only begotten Son, from the manſions

manſions of bliſs and glory, to reſcue mankind out of inevitable ruin and deſtruction, and to open for us an entrance into the joy of our Lord. Theſe are indiſputably ſuch a complication of ſtupendous unparallel'd mercies, that they muſt needs be a moſt endearing engagement to any one that has the leaſt ſpark of generoſity or ingenuity, to have a more than ordinary zeal for ſo good a God, and to make every true Chriſtian reſign the reins of his affections to religious objects without any other boundary or meaſure, than what is ſet him by the finiteneſs of his natural powers.

Having thus mention'd the obligations we lie under, to be zealous for God's honour and glory, I think it may not be unſeaſonable to conſider briefly wherein the nature of zeal conſiſts. Zeal is properly ſuch a vehement and intenſe promotion of all God Almighty's infinite and adorable perfections, as engages a man upon ſuch heroick and commendable actions, as will make our religion ſpread and flouriſh over the chriſtian world. A zealous man endeavours after the moſt exalted degrees and eminences of holineſs: Such as are the paſſionate applications of ſeraphick love; acts of ecſtatick joy and complacency in the perfections of the divine nature; holy tranſports of devotion, praiſe and adoration; a moſt profound eſteem and veneration for God's glory, and whatever elſe has the leaſt tendency thereunto. This is the effect of a pious, and conſequently of a prudent zeal; and indeed, 'tis ſcarce imaginable how any man who ſeriouſly and deliberately contemplates the inexhauſtible love of our great Creator and Redeemer in all his diſpenſations towards us, can,

The nature of Zeal conſider'd.

can forbear loving him, with all the powers and faculties of his ſoul, and being raviſh'd with wonder and admiration. whatever we love on this ſide the grave, we can love but finitely, and what is that to him who is infinitely lovely?

Motives *to* practice. Let us then endeavour (in imitation of St. *Simon* and St. *Jude*, who were very eminent for their extraordinary zeal in their bleſſed Maſter's cauſe) to perform God's *will on Earth as it is in Heaven*, (i. e.) with the greateſt zeal, readineſs and alacrity, with all the degrees of ſeraphick ardency that frail mortality is capable of. Let us ſettle our affections upon the ἰδέα τῦ Ἀγαθῦ, that Almighty Being, who can entertain all our faculties: Our underſtandings as he is truth, and our wills as he is goodneſs; and that in the higheſt degree, becauſe he is infinite in both. And now, who can refuſe taking his fill of the river of *Paradiſe*, and drinking deep of the *well of life?* Who would not make the moſt zealous advance to the ſtate of Angels, and endeavour to reſemble our great Creator? Let us then, antedate our parts in the choir above, by our converſation here below, till we ſhall be fully bleſt with the beatifick viſion, and the glories and ſplendor of the divine brightneſs.

Concluſion.

The

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty and moſt glorious Lord God! whoſe admirable perfections (tho' incomprehenſible by our ſhallow capacities) are yet amiable and adorable! I beſeech thee, to ſtrike my ſoul, with ſuch lively and raviſhing apprehenſions of thy excellencies; ſuch bright irradiations of thy divine light, that I may perceive enough to love thee infinitely, to depend upon thee for my happineſs entirely, to live upon holy hopes and comfortable expectations, and to ſupport my ſpirits under the greateſt dejections and calamities, with the delightful proſpect of thy eternal glories. O grant me thy aſſiſting grace, that I may follow the excellent example of thy ſervants* Simon *and* Jude, *that my ſoul may be wound up to the higheſt pitch of zeal which my faculties will bear, and let me never alienate any degree of that noble paſſion, from thee, its only due object. For* whom, O Lord, have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth, that I deſire in compariſon of thee. *Therefore, reſerve for me a place among thoſe that eminently love thee, and make me glad with the joy of thy countenance, in thy manſions of bliſs, thro' the merits and mediation of* Jeſus Chriſt, *my bleſſed Lord and Saviour.* Amen.

The

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who haſt built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf, being the chief corner-ſtone: Grant us, ſo to be join'd together in unity of ſpirit, by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple, acceptable unto thee, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

ALL

Morning. Pſalms 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. *Evening.* 6, 7, 8.

ALL SAINTS DAY.

Morning. 1 Leſſ. Wiſ. 3. 2. Heb. 11. & 12. *par.* *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. Wiſ. 5. 2. Apo. 19.

BEcauſe it would be an impoſſible undertaking to celebrate diſtinctly the memorial of every one of thoſe heroick *Saints*, in whom piety and virtue have been eminent and illuſtrious; therefore the Church hath prudently thought fit, to ſet apart this feſtival, for the commemoration of *All Saints* in general, that we might thankfully praiſe and adore Almighty God, for the brave examples of devout and courageous Chriſtians who have *fought a good fight, and finiſh'd their courſe*, and are ſafely landed on the ſhore of a happy eternity. This day opens the gates of Heaven to us, and preſents us with an admirable map of beauties, even the glorious ſociety of the celeſtial Choir; where we may behold the triumphant army of bleſſed *Saints* and *Angels* (who were once under probation as we are) advanc'd above Satan's malice, or death's power, and placed in the regions of bliſs and immortality.

This feſtival includes All Saints, *both* militant *and* triumphant.

But that we may fully underſtand the deſign of the Church in inſtituting this feſtival, we muſt know that it was appointed for a devout commemoration of *All Saints*, both *militant* here on Earth, and *triumphant* in the kingdom of Heaven. Of the firſt, the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh expreſly, *Thou art my Lord, my goodneſs extendeth not to thee, but to the Saints that are in the*

the Earth. (Pſalm. xvi. 2, 3.) Now, ſuch perſons are truly and properly *Saints*, as are called by a holy calling, and not diſobedient unto it: Such as are endued with an holy faith, and purified thereby: Such as are ſanctified by the holy Spirit of God, and by virtue thereof do lead a holy and religious life, *perfecting holineſs in the fear of God:* Such perſons are really and truly *Saints* in the Church *militant*, and have a *Communion* one with the other. And this is one grand article of the chriſtian faith, *viz. I believe the Communion of* Saints.

Wherein the Communion *of* Saints *in the* Church militant *conſiſts.*

And now, that we may know wherein the *Communion of* Saints in the Church Militant conſiſts, (in the words of a modern writer) it naturally appears to be this: That there is, and ought to be, a mutual intercourſe and ſociety, fellowſhip and communion, in all uſual and regular ways, between the ſeveral reſpective Churches and Congregations of Chriſtians and Believers; whereby they declare unto the whole World, that altho' both neceſſity and conveniency oblige them to aſſemble in diſtinct places and compoſe different ſocieties; nevertheleſs, they are all members of one and the ſame body, of which *Chriſt Jeſus* is the head: That they are all guided by the ſame Spirit, communicate in the ſame inſtitutions, and govern'd by the ſame general rules; ſo that whatſoever is regularly perform'd and determin'd in one Congregation, is aſſented to in all others; and whoſoever is received into Communion in one Church, is freely admitted into any other. And this is that which in our Creed is called the *holy Catholick*, or univerſal *Church*. For, ſince we are all incorporated under *Jeſus Chriſt*, the ſupreme head of the Church; ſince we have all benefit

benefit of the ſame ordinances, partake of the ſame promiſes, are endued with the graces of the ſame mutual love and affection, *keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, we muſt needs have *fellowſhip one with another*; and not only ſo, but may be aſſured of our eternal fellowſhip with the bleſſed *Saints* hereafter: For, *we are no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the* Saints, *and of the houſhold of God.* (*Epheſ.* ii. 19.) which brings me to the conſideration of our Communion with the *Saints* in the Church *triumphant.*

Wherein the Communion of *Saints in the* Church triumphant *conſiſts.*

Our Communion with the *Saints* in glory, conſiſts in this: *viz.* On our part, we are to rejoice at their felicity, and praiſe almighty God, that he has exchang'd their corruptions and mortality for robes of endleſs glory: We ſhould be raviſh'd with pleaſure, and wound up into a high admiration of the divine goodneſs, to behold thoſe that were once encompaſſed with innumerable difficulties and temptations, now made partakers of thoſe tranſcendent delights, which *eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive.* The remembrance of their glory, ſhould alſo ſtrongly excite us to follow their good examples, till we come to be made partakers of that heavenly kingdom. In the mean time, we ſhall never want matter to praiſe God in their behalf, ſince they make good their Communion with us, by doing us many and great ſervices which we cannot perceive, and joining in our devotions to our common Creator; *Angels* and *Arch-Angels* with us, and we with them, lauding and magnifying God's glorious name. Moreover, thoſe bleſſed *Saints* conceive a new joy at our repentance, and find a freſh pleaſure and

delight ſpringing up in their minds, whenever they hear the joyful tidings of a ſinner reſcued from the ſlavery of the Devil, and a new member added to the kingdom of God, that ſhall be a companion and ſharer with them in that bleſſedneſs which they enjoy. Thus it appears, that there is a communion between us and thoſe bleſſed Spirits, in that they pity and wiſh well to us, and we praiſe God, with, and for them: "But what they do in heaven in relation to us "on Earth, more particularly conſidered; or "what we ought to perform in reference to "them, beſides a reverential reſpect, and ſtudy of "imitation, is not revealed to us in the Scriptures, "nor can be concluded by neceſſary deduction "from any principles of Chriſtianity". It ſufficeth, that death cannot diſſolve the *Communion of Saints* with one another, which is founded on the Church, which tho' part on Earth and part in Heaven, is yet but one and the ſame ſociety; train'd up in the ſame ſchool, and in due time will be altogether advanced to dwell together in the ſame ſtate of glory and immortality.

Wherein the Communion *of* All-Saints *conſiſts.*

And now, to ſum up the whole matter, (in the words of a learned writer) *All-Saints*, (thoſe which are ſo in outward eſteem, as profeſſing chriſtian faith and obedience, or thoſe which are ſo in heart, and inward diſpoſition: Thoſe which either now converſe upon earth, or which are received into Heaven) either in obligation ſhould, or in effect do communicate, partake, join together, conſent and agree, in what concerns *Saints* or members of the ſame body; in believing and acknowledging the ſame heavenly truth; in performances of devotions and offices, of piety towards God, with

or

or for one another; in charitable affection and good will towards each other; in affording mutual aſſiſtance and ſupplies towards each others either ſpiritual or temporal good; in mutual condolency and compaſſion of each others evil, congratulation and complacency in each others happineſs; *in having* (according to St. *Paul*'s words) *the ſame care for one another; ſo that if one member ſuffers, all the members ſuffer together with it; or if one member be honour'd, all the members rejoice with it*, (1 Cor. xii. 25. 26.) So that in a word, *All-Saints* (or *ſanctified perſons*) have Communion with *Angels* and *Arch-Angels*, *Cherubins* and *Seraphins*; with the *glorious company of the Apoſtles*, the *goodly fellowſhip of the Prophets*, the *noble army of Martyrs*; and with the holy Church *militant* on Earth, and *triumphant* in the kingdom of Heaven.

For the Epiſtle. Rev. 5. *from* v. 2. *to* v. 13.

MEDITATIONS FOR ALL-SAINTS DAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 5. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 13.

AMONG the many and great advantages of piety and virtue, there is not one that can have a more prevailing influence upon the wills and affections of mankind, than an aſſurance of thoſe eternal rewards which are prepared for all ſuch as *continue patient in well-doing*. The deſire of happineſs is incorporated and interwoven with our nature; 'tis the rule of our inclinations, and the end of all our actions: But at the ſame time there is nothing here below, that can yield us any true and ſolid ſatisfaction. And ſo, if ever we deſign to be compleatly happy, we muſt pre-

Happineſs the univerſal deſire of man.

pare our ſelves for the joys of Heaven, which are ſpiritual and ſublime, and proportion'd to our nobleſt and moſt capacious faculties. Celeſtial bleſſedneſs as much exceeds our moſt rais'd thoughts, as God is more glorious in himſelf than in any repreſentation made of him, by the ſhadows of our earthly imaginations. *For, eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love him,* (1 Cor. ii. 9.) And therefore I ſhall confine my thoughts to the ſubject matter of this day. The bodies of the *Saints* ſhall be raiſed from the grave, and beautified with the moſt ſplendid ornaments. Then they will be introduc'd into the ſociety of the bleſſed *Spirits of juſt men made perfect*, who will welcome their arrival, and entertain them with everlaſting hymns of glory to the undivided *Trinity*. There we ſhall meet with all thoſe excellent perſons, thoſe brave minds, thoſe innocent and charitable ſouls, whom we have ſeen, and heard, and read of in this world. Then we ſhall be conducted into the company of the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, *Apoſtles* and *Martyrs*, and introduc'd into an intimate acquaintance with them, and with all thoſe great and generous ſouls, who by their glorious examples have recommended themſelves to the world. And what an unſpeakable felicity muſt it be, to ſpend an eternity in ſuch noble converſation? and to philoſophize freely with Angels and Arch-Angels, and all the bleſſed company of Heaven? The joys will certainly be ſo compleat and raviſhing, that a *thouſand years there are but as one day* in this vale of miſery. How inexpreſſibly great is the happineſs that proceeds from the illumination

Happineſs *of the* Saints *in* Heaven.

tion of a purify'd ſoul? All that is beautiful or deſirable here, the Kingdoms of the whole World with all their ſplendor is but a faint ſhadow of that glory, a drop of that vaſt ocean of delights: For this is indeed the *peace of God which paſſes all underſtanding.*

If then we deſire to be like the Saints in glory, we muſt charge our ſelves with a ſtrict imitation of their holineſs and virtue. Upon theſe days we ſhould propound to our ſelves as our patterns, all thoſe holy and excellent perſons who have gone before us, and are at *reſt from their labours*, and all the good works which they have done; who are gone along with them, and who are now, and ſhall for ever be receiving the comfort and reward of them. And if we tread in their ſteps by a zealous imitation of the piety and holineſs of their lives, and of the conſtancy and patience of their ſufferings; we ſhall one day be tranſlated into their bleſſed ſociety, and be made partakers with them of the ſame glorious reward. *For if we have our fruit unto holineſs, our end ſhall be everlaſting life.* Motives to practice.

The PRAYER.

MOST gracious God! the author of ſanctity, and the lover of all unity; whoſe wiſdom has eſtabliſh'd an admirable communion between the Church triumphant in Heaven, and militant on Earth, as members of the ſame myſtical body, whereof thy Son Jeſus Chriſt *is the head: Mercifully grant, that as thy bleſſed* Saints *continually adore the brightneſs of thy Majeſty, ſo I may in correſpondency to their conſtant employment perpetually celebrate thy praiſe, and imitate*

their holy converſation till we all meet before thy glorious throne, and unanimouſly join to ſing eternal Hallelujahs, *to Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, to whom be all glory and honour, adoration and thankſgiving, now and for ever.* Amen.

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who haſt knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowſhip, in the myſtical body of thy Son *Chriſt* our Lord: Grant me grace to follow thy bleſſed *Saints* in all virtuous and godly living, that I may come to thoſe unſpeakable joys which thou haſt prepar'd for them that unfeignedly love thee through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

AN

A N

APPENDIX.

Giving an ACCOUNT of the

Three Grand Solemnities

Added to the

LITURGY

OF THE

Church of ENGLAND.

Miſericordia Dei ſupra omnia Opera ejus.

Morning. Pſalms *prop.* 35. 64. 124. 129. *Evening.* 27, 28, 29.

GUN-POWDER TREASON DAY.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. 2 Sam. 22. 2. Act. 23. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. Eccl. 23. 2. 1 Theſſ. 1.

WHILST this land and monarchy flouriſh'd amidſt a moſt happy and deſirable peace, as well at home as abroad, ſuſtain'd and conducted by thoſe two main pillars of good government; piety and juſtice: *Anno* 1605. in the third year of the reign of *James* the firſt, King of *England*, the *Papiſts* contriv'd an infernal [a] plot: Which was to blow up with *Gun-powder* both houſes of Parliament at a time when the King, Prince, and all the Nobility ſhould be ſitting in the upper-houſe, and all the Knights and Burgeſſes in the lower. A villany ſo black and horrid, ſo inhuman and barbarous, that it is ſcarce to be parallel'd in any age or nation. *Gun-powder Treaſon Plot.*

The principal conſpirator was *Robert Catesby*, a gentleman of a plentiful fortune, who firſt contriv'd the ſtratagem, and communicated it to *Thomas Piercy*, *Robert Winter*, *Thomas Winter*, *John Grant*, *Ambroſe Rookwood*, *John Wright*, *Francis Treſham*, Sir *Everard Digby*, and other gentlemen of good eſtates; who like combuſtible matter took fire at the firſt motion, and thought to acquire eternal renown among the *The principal Conſpirators, who.*

[a] Vide *Dr.* Barlow's *diſcourſe of* Gun-powder Treaſon, *Printed at* London, 1679.

Papiſts

Papiſts by effecting it. And to the end that they might proceed with the greater ſecrecy, Mr. *Piercy* hires a cellar under the Parliament houſe, wherein he lays ſeveral barrels of *Gunpowder*, and covers them with wood and faggots. Thus the firſt part of the plot was laid in good readineſs, and they reſolv'd to put their diabolical deſign in execution upon the *fifth of November* when the King and both houſes were to meet; but withal, they had a deſign of preſerving the lady *Elizabeth* and making her Queen, that under her minority they might re-eſtabliſh popery. To which end they appointed a great hunting-match on the day when the blow was to be given, at *Dunſmore Heath* in *Warwickſhire* where the lady *Elizabeth* was. Thus they thought themſelves very politick and ſecure; but one of them being willing to ſave the lord *Monteagle*, wrote the following letter to him.

MY LORD,

A Letter *ſent to the Lord* Monteagle.

"OUT of the love I bear to ſome of your "friends, I have a care of your preſer- "vation. Therefore I would wiſh you (as you "tender yourſelf) to forbear your attendance "at this Parliament; for God and Man have "concurr'd to puniſh the wickedneſs of this "time. And think not ſlightly of this adver- "tiſement; for tho' there be no appearance "of any ſtir, yet, I ſay, they ſhall receive a "terrible blow this Parliament, and yet they "ſhall not ſee who hurt them. This counſel "is not to be contemn'd, becauſe it may do you "good, and can do you no harm: for the "danger is paſt as ſoon as you burn this letter. "I hope God will give you grace to make uſe

"of

" of it, to whoſe holy protection I commend " you".

The Lord *Monteagle* was very much ſurpriz'd at the reception of this letter, and immediately repairs to his Majeſty's Chapel at *Whitehall*, and communicated the contents of it to the Earl of *Salisbury* his Majeſty's principal Secretary. The Earl knowing not what to make of it, acquainted the Lord *Chamberlain* with it, and then the Earls of *Worceſter* and *Northampton*, who having all of them concurr'd to a re-examination of the ſaid letter, they concluded that how ſlight a matter it might at firſt appear to be, yet it was not abſolutely to be contemn'd; and therefore they acquainted the King with it as ſoon as he return'd from hunting. The King conſidering it, told them that it certainly imported ſome ſudden danger, and ſo he commanded that a ſtrict ſearch ſhould be made about the Parliament Houſe. Whereupon the Lord *Chamberlain* accompany'd with the Lord *Monteagle*, enter'd the vault under the upper-houſe, where they found great ſtore of billets, faggots, and coals; and enquiring of *Whinyard* (keeper of the wardrobe) to what uſe he had put thoſe lower rooms and cellars, he told them, he had let the vault to Mr. *Thomas Piercy*, and that the wood and coals belong'd to him. But the Lord *Chamberlain* caſting his eye aſide, eſpy'd *Guido Fawks* ſtanding up in a corner; who being queſtion'd what he did there, ſaid, he was Mr. *Piercy*'s ſervant. Upon this, the Lord *Monteagle* ſuſpected ſomewhat more than ordinary, and had a ſtrong impulſe that *Piercy* was the author of the letter; and ſo after a ſecond conſultation, the King and council order'd Sir

Reveal'd to the Earl of Salisbury *and others.*

The King's *Orders for ſearching the* Parliament H. *and the* Vaults *under it.*

Sir *Thomas Knevet*, (a gentleman of his Majeſty's privy-chamber) diligently to re-ſearch the cellar; who with a retinue coming into that infernal vault, (the very night before the intended maſſacre) they diſcover'd *Guido Fawkes* at the door with his boots on, and preſently ſeiz'd upon him; but ſearching his pockets they found a piece of touch-wood, a tinder-box, and a watch which Mr. *Piercy* had bought the day before, to try how long the touch-wood would burn that was prepar'd to give fire to the train of *Powder*. After that they went into the cellar, and found thirty ſix barrels of *Gun-powder* hid under the coals and faggots. *Fawkes* finding himſelf detected, confeſt the fact, declaring that the *Devil, and not God was the diſcoverer*. Moreover he told them, *That if he had been within the vault when he was taken, as he was immediately before, he would inſtantly have blown it up.*

Guido Fawkes *found at Midnight at the Door of the Parliament Houſe.*

The Plot *diſcover'd.*

The plot being thus miraculouſly diſcover'd by the watchful providence of the Almighty, the happy news was brought to the King at four o'th' clock in the morning, who order'd the High-Sheriffs of *Warwickſhire* and *Worceſterſhire* to purſue the reſt of the conſpirators; who were apprehended and taken at *Stephen Littleton*'s houſe at *Halbeach*. *Piercy* and *Cateſby* ſallied out deſperately and fought till they were both kill'd, and ſo were *John* and *Chriſtopher Wright*. *Thomas Winter*, *Francis Treſham*, and the reſt were taken. *Treſham* died of a ſtrangury in the Tower: But *Thomas Winter*, *Guido Fawkes*, *Robert Keys*, *Thomas Bates*, *Robert Winter*, *John Grant*, *Ambroſe Rookwood*, and Sir *Everard Digby*, were all executed. And the King gave the Lord *Monteagle*, (the firſt diſcoverer)

The Conſpirators *apprehended.*

And executed.

coverer) five hundred pound *per Annum* for his life, beſides two hundred pound a year to him and his heirs for ever. And to the end that the whole Kingdom might be truly mindful of ſuch a merciful diſpenſation, he cauſed the *Fifth of November* to be ſet apart for the praiſes and celebration of the divine goodneſs, which was then ſolemnly perform'd, and hath been ſince, and I hope will be continued to the end of the World.

Epiſtle. Rom. 13. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 8.

MEDITATIONS FOR GUN-POWDER TREASON DAY.

Goſpel. Matt. 27. *from* v. 1. *to* v. 11.

THE ſtrange and miraculous deliverance of this Church and nation, is an illuſtrious demonſtration of the unerring providence of the Almighty. On this day, in the reign of King *James* the firſt, the *Gun-powder Treaſon* was wonderfully diſcover'd and happily prevented. The *Plot* was concerted and carry'd on by thoſe only of the *Romiſh* Church, (the implacable enemies of the reformation) and the malice that inſpir'd the conſpirators was ſo diabolical, that nothing but Hell could be the original of it. For the deſign was laid to have given no time nor warning to thoſe who were to be maſſacred; but King, Prince, and Parliament, were all to be blown up and deſtroy'd in a moment, had their tender mercies prevail'd: So that they were reſolv'd to make the whole nation one great *Aceldama*; and not only our lives, but religion

A relation of our Enemies *malice.*

religion were in extreme danger. Yet Heaven confounded this unparallel'd wicked enterprize by an unexpected diſcovery. The Almighty and all-ſeeing Lord viſibly manifeſted his ſtupendous wiſdom and power by this ſeaſonable interpoſition of his providence: He detected their private intrigues and cruel machinations; ſo that all their politicks prov'd to be folly, and they were taken in their own craftineſs. This deliverance was a ſubſtantial bleſſing, and the fruitful parent of many more; a mercy which preſerv'd the true religion from extirpation, and ſecur'd it to after-ages. On this day likewiſe the Almighty hath refreſh'd our memories by a ſecond deliverance; which was by the happy arrival of his late majeſty King *William*, to whom were given the courage and reſolution to venture his perſon, and hazard his fortunes in the World to reſcue us and the proteſtant intereſt from popery and arbitrary power. And therefore we ought joyfully to celebrate the infinite wiſdom, and power, and goodneſs of our bleſſed Lord, which ſo eminently appear'd in theſe wonderful works. Such extraordinary favours deſerve extraordinary praiſes; mercies ſo great and ineſtimable, merit reiterated, and redoubled acts of gratitude; and a day ſo ſignaliz'd, and ſingled out by Providence ought to be for ever ſolemniz'd with joy and thankſgiving by all the true ſons of the Church.

A deſcription of the Event.

Thanks *and* praiſe *due to God upon this account.*

The providence of Almighty God is too large and copious a ſubject to be throughly treated of in this place, and therefore at preſent let it ſuffice to ſay: That the divine Providence regulates all the actions and intentions of men; and that there is not one occurrence of life, but proceeds by the rule and ſtandard of its antece-

God's Providence.

dent

dent *fiat*. Let our enemies be never ſo crafty and numerous, we have a help at hand who diſcerns their moſt ſecret *Plots*, baffles their moſt politick deſigns, and invalidates their moſt formidable preparations. This day's ſolemnity gives us an eminent proof of this: For the horrid conſpiracy was contriv'd in Hell and darkneſs, and they proceeded with all the ſecrecy imaginable: But the Almighty, by his unerring providence (as it were) ſnatch'd a King and Kingdom out of the very jaws of death: By his omnipotent power he diſſipated their cunning attempts: By his infinite wiſdom he found out and laid open all their cruel and conceal'd intrigues: And by his eminent juſtice paid them the wages of their iniquity; and ſo preſerv'd his Church for his own glory, and as an everlaſting monument of his marvellous goodneſs. This is a noble illuſtration of the divine *Philanthropy*, and does but reflect a brighter luſtre upon the perfections of the Almighty, than if it had never been contriv'd. For, if God make us like the miraculous buſh, unburnt in the midſt of theſe flames, we may neither feel nor fear harm. Only thus, the malice of the wicked is diſcover'd and diſappointed, and the divine power and mercy is more manifeſted, and his name more glorify'd than if we had never been aſſaulted. We need not be terrified at our moſt inveterate oppoſers, ſo long as we have the aid and protection of an irreſiſtible power: For, be our foes never ſo numerous or potent, their contrivances and preparations never ſo great, till they can conquer Heaven they need not amaze us, who cannot periſh while God is *for us*.

Illuſtriouſly manifeſted in this Day's *deliverance.*

Let us then, who are members of this reform'd Church, joyfully celebrate the praiſes of the

Concluſion.

the divine Majeſty for theſe continu'd wonders the providence, and admirable demonſtrations of his love: Let us adhere ſtedfaſtly to the true religion, and vigorouſly promote its intereſt by a holy and exemplary life. And let us in all dangers and neceſſities call on the name of that ſupreme Lord, the Creator of Heaven and Earth, who neither wants power nor inclination, to reſcue all thoſe who put their truſt in him.

The PRAYER.

O *Omnipotent Lord God! who didſt on this day miraculouſly deliver thy Church from the wicked conſpiracies and malicious practices of all the enemies thereof: Make me, I moſt humbly beſeech thee, truly ſenſible of this and all other thine ineſtimable bleſſings from time to time beſtowed upon us. 'Tis thou, O Lord! that canſt defeat the aſſaults of our moſt formidable oppoſers, and make the methods which they take to advance their cauſe prove the ruin of it. Let the conſideration of this amazing goodneſs, and all-wiſe Providence make me joyfully celebrate thy praiſe, not only with my lips, but in my life, by giving up my ſelf to thy ſervice, and by walking before thee in holineſs and righteouſneſs all my days, through* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, all honour and glory, power, might, majeſty and dominion, be aſcrib'd by all Angels, and all Men, and all Creatures, now, and to all eternity.* Amen.

The

The COLLECT.

ETernal God! and our moſt mighty protector, I thy unworthy ſervant do moſt humbly preſent my ſelf before thy Majeſty, acknowledging thy power, wiſdom and goodneſs in preſerving the King, and the Eſtates of this Realm aſſembled in Parliament, from the deſtruction this day intended againſt them. Make me, I beſeech thee, truly thankful for this thy great mercy towards me; particularly for making this day again memorable by a freſh inſtance of thy loving kindneſs towards me. I bleſs thee for giving his late Majeſty a ſafe arrival here, and for making all oppoſition fall before him till he became our King and Governour. Protect and defend our ſovereign Lord the King, and all the Royal Family from all treaſons and conſpiracies. Preſerve him in thy faith, fear and love; proſper his reign with long happineſs here on Earth, and crown his reign with everlaſting glory hereafter, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our only Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

Morning. Pſalm. *prop.* 7, 9, 10, 11.

Evening. 38, 64, 143.

King CHARLES's Martyrdom.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. 2 Sam. 1. 2. Mat. 27. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. Jer. 41. 2. Heb. 11. *and* 12. *par.*

THE hiſtory of this day's tragedy need not be repeated here, becauſe ſome yet alive remember it, and others may read it in our [9] annals, where it ſtands to the everlaſting infamy of all that acted therein. It is ſufficient to my purpoſe, to give this brief account of it.

King Charles *the Firſt, a character of his* Perſon *and* Temper.

King *Charles* the firſt was certainly a Prince of admirable endowments, both of mind and body. In his temper he was brave, magnificent, liberal and conſtant. He was of a majeſtick comely preſence, and did not fall ſhort of the braveſt *Heroes* in perſonal valour. He was very conſtant and regular in his devotions; a great patron of the clergy of the Church of *England*, and ſo zealous for the doctrine and diſcipline of that Church, that he ſeal'd it with his blood; and when he could no longer ſupport it with his arms, he defended it with his pen beyond all contradiction. In ſhort, (as one gives a character of him) "He was the beſt of huſ-"bands, the beſt of fathers, the beſt of maſters, "and the beſt of men". But notwithſtanding all theſe admirable accompliſhments, ſeveral rebels of debauch'd principles and forfeited con-

[9] Vid. *The Hiſtory of* England, *Vol. II. Pag.* 173.

ſcie n ces,

ſciences, not only impeach'd the King's legal miniſters, and purſu'd his loyal ſubjects with fire and ſword, but boldly demanded one branch of his prerogative after another, till at laſt they unjuſtly impriſon'd him, and falſely charg'd him with the murthers and oppreſſions which they themſelves had caus'd; condemn'd him without law, and executed him without mercy. And now that we may know how this good King behav'd himſelf under all theſe afflicting diſpenſations, I will ſet down ſome remarkable paſſages as I have collected them from a modern hiſtorian.

The unjuſt Proceed-ings *againſt* him.

After the ſentence of death was moſt unjuſtly paſſed upon the King, the rude ſoldiers ſcoffed at him as he went down ſtairs, blew the ſmoke of their tobacco in his face (a thing always very offenſive to him) and one more abominably inſolent than the reſt ſpit in his face, which his Majeſty patiently wip'd off, taking no farther notice of it: And as he paſſed along, hearing ſome of them (by the inſtigation of their officers) cry out, *Juſtice, Juſtice, and Execution*, he ſaid, "Alas, poor ſouls! for a piece of money "they would do as much for their command-"ers". Afterward, the King hearing that his execution was determin'd to be the next day, he deſir'd that his two children, namely, the Duke of *Gloceſter*, and the Lady *Elizabeth* might be brought to him, which was accordingly done. And after he had given his bleſſing to the Princeſs, he bid her, "Remember "to tell her brother *James*, that he ſhould no "more look upon *Charles* as his elder brother "only but as his ſovereign; and that they ſhould "love one another, and forgive their father's "enemies". Then taking the Duke of *Glo-*

The inſolency of the Soldiers.

The King ſees his Children.

ceſter upon his knee, he ſaid, "Sweet heart, "now they will cut off thy father's head; (at which words the child look'd very earneſtly upon him) "mark child what I ſay, they will "cut off my head, and perhaps make thee a "King; but I ſay you muſt not be a King ſo "long as your brothers *Charles* and *James* are "alive; for they will cut off your brothers "heads as ſoon as they can catch them, and "cut thine off too at laſt; and therefore, I "charge you do not be made a King by them". To which the child ſighing, reply'd, "I will "be torn in pieces firſt"----which falling very unexpectedly from a child ſo young, it made the King rejoice exceedingly.

The Biſhop of London *aſſiſts him in his* Devotions.

On the fatal day, (being the 30th of *January*,) the Biſhop of *London* read divine ſervice in his preſence, and the 27th of St. *Matthew*, (the hiſtory of our Saviour's paſſion) being appointed by the Church for that day; he gave the Biſhop thanks for his ſeaſonable choice of the leſſon: But the Biſhop acquainting him that it was the ſervice of the day, it comforted him exceedingly, and then he proceeded to receive the holy Sacrament. His devotions being ended, he was brought from St. *James*'s to *Whitehall* by a regiment on foot; and the guards marching but a ſlow pace, the King bid them go faſter, ſaying, "That he now went before "them to ſtrive for an heavenly crown, with "leſs ſolicitude than he had often encourag'd "his ſoldiers to fight for an earthly diadem".

He is brought to the Scaffold.

When he came upon the ſcaffold at the place of execution, he ſaid; "My conſcience (I think)

His excellent Behaviour.

"is very well known to all the world, and "therefore I declare before you all, that I dye "a Chriſtian according to the profeſſion of the "Church

" Church of *England*". Then turning to the executioner, he ſaid, " I ſhall ſay but very ſhort " prayers, and when I thruſt out my hands, " let that be your ſign". After this, having put on his night-cap, he ſaid to the executioner, " Does my hair trouble you"? Who deſir'd him to put it under his cap, which was done accordingly. Then ſaid he, " I have a good " cauſe, and a righteous God on my ſide". To which the Biſhop reply'd, *There is but one ſtage more; which tho' turbulent and full of trouble is yet a ſhort one; but you may conſider it will ſoon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from Earth to Heaven, and there you will find the deſir'd prize, a crown of glory.* Then anſwered the King, " I go from a corruptible to an " incorruptible crown, where there is no diſ- " turbance at all". After this the King took off his cloak and his George, giving the latter to the Biſhop; ſaying, *Remember.* Then looking upon the block, he ſaid to the Executioner; " You muſt ſet it faſt". To which he made anſwer, *It is faſt, Sir.* At laſt ſaid the King; " When I ſtretch out my hands this way, then " do your work". Soon after ſome ſhort ejaculatory prayers, the King ſtretch'd forth his hands, and the executioner at one blow ſevered his head from his body. They were both put into a coffin cover'd with black velvet, and convey'd to St. *George*'s Chapel, and there interr'd in the vault with this inſcription upon the coffin, *CHARLES* KING OF *ENGLAND.* MDCXLVIII. *His* Martyrdom *and* Burial.

Epiſtle. 1 Pet. 2. *from* v. 13. *to* v. 23.

MEDITATIONS FOR King CHARLES's Martyrdom.

Goſpel. Mat. 21. *from* v. 33. *to* v. 42.

A vindication of the divine Wiſdom *and* Goodneſs.

THE death of the royal martyr, King *Charles* the firſt, was an event horrible and aſtoniſhing in its accompliſhment, and even became more fatal and ruinous in the deſolations which attended it: As all the national miſeries and calamities which have overtaken us ſince that bloody Æra, may be ſaid to derive their exiſtence and ſting from this day's parricide. It may indeed ſeem ſtrange that God ſhould ſuffer his own anointed to fall into the hands of malicious and cruel regicides, when he could eaſily have reſcued him out of their hands: But the divine Providence in the diſpoſal and ordering of things in this world, is too myſterious and incomprehenſible to be fathom'd by our finite underſtandings. The great and wiſe governor of Heaven and Earth, *is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; and therefore, altho' we ſee not the reaſon why he permits a thing to be done, yet we ought to believe there was a juſt reaſon, ſince he did it who can do nothing wrong. God intended (no doubt) to glorify our martyr by his exemplary patience and ſufferings, and to puniſh a ſinful and ungrateful nation by taking him out of it. This excellent King was a perſon in whom the divine grace did eminently appear; the ſhining rays whereof were ſo conſpicuous and ſo dazling as to convert ſome of his perſecutors. His faith was active and ſteady; his patience ſingular and extraordinary;

traordinary; his humility moſt illuſtrious and amiable; his meekneſs under the the higheſt provocations was ſtupendous and admirable: But above all, his behaviour at the hour of his death was moſt magnificent and heroick. At that time he ſeem'd abundantly more compos'd than any of the ſpectators, which beyond all diſpute was a happy prelude to thoſe raviſhing joys which he was going to partake of. His death made him immortal, and he whom they falſly number'd among tranſgreſſors, is now *number'd amongſt the Saints in glory everlaſting.*

The Sins of the Nation, *the cauſe of this day's* Humiliation.

But now what a ſad loſs was here to a diſtreſſed nation? It was certainly a great calamity to us to be ſo ſoon depriv'd of ſo excellent a Prince; and it was abundantly more our loſs than the martyr'd King's, becauſe our welfare depended on him. Without doubt, the people of this land had highly provok'd the King of Heaven by their innumerable tranſgreſſions; otherwiſe he would not have inflicted ſuch a judgment upon Church and State, nor have permitted our Religion and Government to be both ruin'd in the murther of this juſt Prince. He had given him to us in mercy to make us happy; but ſince we deſpiſed his love, as well as our own felicity, he took him away in his heavy diſpleaſure. Let us therefore take care not to perſevere in our wickedneſs, but inſtantly ſhake it off by repentance, and heartily implore the divine mercy; for no importunity is too great to avert ſo dreadful vengeance as the death of our lawful Sovereign deſerves, or to procure pardon for ſo heinous a ſin.

Concluſion.

To conclude: Let us ſet apart this day to preſerve the remembrance of his bright example; and let us diligently practiſe thoſe excellent vir-

tues for which he was juſtly admir'd, and hold faſt the profeſſion of that faith which he ſealed with his blood. That ſo when our courſe is finiſh'd, we may receive the *Euge bone ſerve, Well done, good and faithful ſervant*, and have our portion with him in that everlaſting glory which he now enjoys.

The PRAYER.

O *Almighty and everlaſting God! juſt and righteous in all thy ways, and wonderful in thy doings towards the children of men; who in thy heavy diſpleaſure, didſt ſuffer the life of our ſovereign King* Charles *the firſt, to be this day taken away by wicked and perfidious hands; I confeſs, O Lord! that our heinous provocations were the cauſe of that eminent judgment upon this Church and Nation: But, O gracious God! call not our old ſins to remembrance, neither lay the blood of the royal martyr to the charge of the people of this land: But, ſpare us, good Lord! ſpare thy people whom thou haſt redeem'd with thy moſt precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever. So ſhall we ſeriouſly lay to heart thy wonderful compaſſion in not cutting us off in our ſins; and admire that incomprehenſible love which gave us a ſpeedy warning of our danger: And for the time to come, vouchſafe me thy aſſiſting grace that I may run the way of thy commandments with vigour, and at laſt be admitted into thy heavenly Kingdom, to live and reign with thee for ever, thro'* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

The

The COLLECTS.

I.

BLeſſed Lord! in whoſe ſight the death of thy Saints is precious; I magnify thy name for that abundant grace beſtow'd on our late martyr'd Sovereign, by which he was enabled ſo chearfully to follow the ſteps of his bleſſed Maſter and Saviour, in a conſtant meek ſuffering of all barbarous indignities, and at laſt reſiſting unto blood; and even then according to the ſame pattern, praying for his murderers. Let his memory, O Lord! be ever bleſſed among us, that we may follow the example of his patience and charity. And grant that this our land may be freed from the vengeance of his blood, and thy mercy glorified in the forgiveneſs of our ſins, and all for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake. *Amen.*

II.

GRANT, Lord! I beſeech thee, that the courſe of this world may be ſo peaceably order'd by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully ſerve thee in all godly quietneſs, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt*. Amen.

THE

Morning. Pſalms *prop.* 20, 21, 84, 118. *Evening.* 142, 143.

THE RESTAURATION OF K. CHARLES II.

Morning. 1. Leſſ. 2 Sam. 19. 2. Ro. 13. *Evening.* 1. Leſſ. Neh. 13. 2. 1 Cor. 12.

KING *Charles* the firſt being taken off and ſlain by wicked hands, ſons of *Belial*, in the manner before mention'd upon the 30th day of *January*, 1648; his eldeſt Son, Prince *Charles*, by unqueſtionable right ſucceeded to the crown of *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, in the 18th year of his age: So that we may conclude that the miſeries and ſhades of that day made this ſolemnity more illuſtrious and tranſporting. The royal Martyr's cruel tragedy, and all the woful conſequences of it in Church and State for a long ſpace of time, made this day to be celebrated with ſuch extraordinary and univerſal rejoicing, as if the nation had got a new ſoul, and every man had this day been firſt made free. For twelve years was our illuſtrious King depriv'd of his Sovereignty by traytors and regicides; by which means our religion, our liberty, our eſtates and lives were all at ſtake; ſo that plundering and ſequeſtration, fines and impriſonment, baniſhment and the ſword had made our condition ſeem helpleſs and our ruin unavoidable. But on a ſudden we had a moſt convincing evidence of God's abundant goodneſs in reſtoring our ancient government and religion; ſo that our Church and Monarchy ſeem'd to have a new reſurrection from the grave. On *May* the 8th, *Anno Domini* 1660. his Majeſty was

was proclaim'd with univerſal joy and acclamations in the Cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*, the *Lords* and *Commons*, and the *Lord Mayor* and *Aldermen* being preſent. And on this day he made his magnificent entrance into his ſtately and rich *Metropolis*, the renown'd City of *London*. At St. *George*'s fields the *Lord Mayor* with a profound reverence deliver'd the ſword to his Majeſty, and receiv'd it again with great marks of reſpect. From thence the King was conducted through *London* to his royal palace of *Whitehall*, with all the exultation and ſplendor imaginable: After which, the firſt thing he did was to pay his moſt ſolemn devotions to Almighty God, who had miraculouſly brought about ſo unexpected and ſurprizing an event.

King Charles proclaim'd and reſtored to his Kingdom.

And now certainly we cannot but acknowledge it very ſtrange, that this Prince which our mighty Demagogues had before deſpiſed, excluded and baniſh'd as unworthy and unfit to govern, ſhould come to the crown with ſuch general acclamations, and extraordinary demonſtrations of an univerſal joy. After ſo many years of tyranny and anarchy, faction and impiety, miſery and confuſion, to ſee our oppreſſors ſuddenly vaniſh as ſmoke before the wind; our ancient government, and our lawful ſovereign, our native liberties, and God's true religion reſtor'd without blood, or the leaſt oppoſition, was the wonder of all the chriſtian world, and ſo great a bleſſing to this Land, that ſo long as the Church of *England*, and that royal family then reſtor'd continue; ſo long this day muſt be regiſter'd in our kalenders, as a day of ſolemn praiſe and thankſgiving. And ſince we and all ſucceeding generations ſhall receive the benefit of the eſtabliſhments then made, we, and

The ſtrangeneſs of this Deliverance.

and our posterity are bound to keep up the memorial of this stupendous work.

Epistle. 1 Pet. 2. *from* v. 11. *to* v. 18.

MEDITATIONS FOR THE Restauration of King CHARLES II.

Gospel. Mat. 22. *from* v. 16. *to* v. 23.

The miracles of divine Mercy.

THE restoring our Monarchy, and re-establishing our Church, were such a mighty demonstration of the infinite goodness and mercy of our great Creator, that this day ought to be celebrated with the greatest joy and exultation. Let us but consider what miserable confusions we were reduced to, both in Church and State, when our ancient government in both were subverted; and we shall discover such miracles of wisdom and power, such complications of goodness and mercy in our deliverance, that we shall be over-whelm'd with admiration at their superiour glories! Our lawful Prince was excluded and banish'd his dominions, and violent methods of government were made use of, when they that hated us rul'd over us, and the *Psalmist*'s imprecation, or rather prophecy, was become our portion, (Psal. cix. 6.) *Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him, and let Satan stand at his right hand.* The articles of faith, rites of worship, and rules of discipline were mangled and defac'd, and the vilest sects tolerated in their insolence and enthusiasm, so that the whole nation appear'd like a rude and disorderly *Chaos*. In this sad state of affairs, who could have imagin'd that the voice of joy and gladness

Our great Troubles.

gladneſs ſhould ever have been heard in that oppreſſed royal Family? But God Almighty by a ſingle act of his omnipotency, caus'd light to break forth from the deepeſt incloſures of darkneſs, and our gracious Sovereign *Charles* II. was magnificently reſtor'd to his rightful throne, to the univerſal *Jubilee* of the whole nation. What a happy and comfortable change was this to have the true articles of faith, and ancient ways of worſhip reſtor'd, and the ſtate as well as the Church all on a ſudden reduc'd to its priſtine ſplendor, after ſuch invaſions of liberty and property as we had twelve long years ſmarted under? Certainly ſo great, ſo unexpected, ſo peaceable a change can ſcarce be parallel'd in any Nation in the World before; even as unexampled as the precedent outrages upon all that was juſt and ſacred. But this was wrought by that Almighty hand, to which no difficulties are inſuperable. And therefore upon this inſtance of our deliverance, and all its bleſſed effects, *What ſhall we return unto the Lord for all the benefits he hath done unto us?* (Pſalm cxvi. 11.) Let us celebrate his adorable perfections in anthems of praiſe; and let us inſtantly proclaim to all the world that *his mercy endureth for ever*. For we ſhould be marvellouſly ungrateful, if we did not upon this remarkable day of our ſtupendous deliverance, annually pay this juſt tribute of thankſgiving with ſincere gratitude and fervent devotion. Let us then glory in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of our ſalvation: Let us go to the houſe of our Lord, and in the preſence of all his people pay our moſt thankful acknowledgments to him, *who is worthy to* be praiſed; even to the Lord God *of* Iſrael, *who alone doth wondrous things:*

And happy Deliverance.

An Exhortation *to praiſe* God.

Concluſion.

Who

Who *giveth victory unto Kings*, aad preſerveth all thoſe who put their truſt in him.

The PRAYER.

O Omnipotent Lord God! who haſt been exceedingly gracious unto this land, and by thy miraculous providence haſt delivered us out of innumerable troubles and calamities by the happy reſtauration of thy ſervant Charles *the ſecond; the ſenſe of this aſtoniſhing mercy and loving-kindneſs fills my ſoul with admiration! And therefore, I will take delight in nothing more than in ſtudying and meditating upon that infinite mercy which contriv'd, that admirable wiſdom which conducted, and that invincible power which accompliſh'd this ſtupendous work. Lord! let it have ſuch an influence upon my life that I may never more commit one ſingle act of diſobedience againſt thee, or thine anointed, who art my only deliverer and ſure refuge in time of need: That this painful life being ended, I may receive the rewards of thy true and faithful ſervants in thoſe manſions of glory where the ſouls of the righteous are in joy and perfect felicity. Grant this, O merciful Father! for thy dear Son* Jeſus Chriſt's *ſake; to whom with Thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons, but one eternal God, be all honour and glory, might, majeſty, and dominion, now and ever.* Amen.

The

The COLLECT.

O Almighty God! who art a ſtrong tower of defence unto thy ſervants againſt the face of their enemies; I yield thee praiſe and thanks for thy wonderful deliverance of theſe three Kingdoms from THE GREAT REBELLION, and all the Miſeries and Oppreſſions conſequent thereupon, under which they had ſo long groaned. I acknowledge it thy goodneſs that we were not deliver'd over as a prey unto them: Beſeeching thee ſtill to continue ſuch thy mercies towards us, that all the world may know that thou art our Saviour and mighty deliverer, thro' *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. *Amen.*

The DOXOLOGY.

GLORY to the Father, *whoſe wiſdom created us:* Glory to the Son *whoſe love redeemed us:* Glory to the Holy Ghoſt, *whoſe graces ſanctify us:* Glory to the almighty and undivided Trinity, *whoſe works are inſeparable, and dominion without end. To thee belong* praiſe, *and* thankſgiving, *and* honour, *and* power: *And therefore all* honour, *and* power, *and* thanks, *and* praiſe *be unto thee our God, for ever and ever.* Amen.

ΤΩ ΘΕΩ ΜΟΝΩ ΔΟΞΑ.

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